DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP PIPELINE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

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JEFFREY P. ROBINSON

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ABSTRACT

This thesis-project examines whether training and coaching modules designed to begin a process to equip younger leaders can impact their being selected to serve on the church elder board. An analysis of specific lessons and valuable content related to leadership development contained in the biblical record and various leadership resources proved helpful in designing the project. Training modules and coaching interactions were conducted in 2018 with twelve individuals. The selection of three of the twelve to serve as elders indicated that the training modules and coaching positively impacted these men being chosen.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

National Implication

The impact and witness of the church on Western culture has suffered greatly in recent years. Response by society to the Christian and the local church vacillates between indifference and outrage. Plagued by a selfish, complacent, and consumeristic mentality, the church often appears ineffective in impacting secular society with the Gospel of Jesus. One does not have to look far for the cause – church leadership. As the #MeToo movement continues to shed light on the deception and failure of leaders, Christians have not been exempted. The recent revelation of failure on the part of several high-profile Christian pastors validates the need for leadership training based upon Jesus' call for humble, selfless servanthood.

Further, Church programming based on an "attractional model" geared for church growth has produced disciples very much dependent on church leadership for spiritual nourishment, moral accountability, and the one-day-a-week worship experience. Church leaders can, at times, find themselves frustrated with a lack of spiritual maturity and low-level engagement by the congregation they lead. These challenges are leadership issues. Addressing many of the challenges can be most effectively accomplished by establishing a clear pathway to raise up more leaders who deflect attention off themselves, point to Jesus, and produce disciples who are more dependent on Christ than church programming and leadership personalities.

Where is the project taking place?

The opening chapter will introduce the problem and setting for the project. Loudonville Community Church is a mid-sized (900 plus attendees) community, non-denominational, evangelical church in the most affluent area of Albany, NY. Interestingly, it is also located five minutes away from the most impoverished section of the Capital District. Planted by Presbyterians in the mid-1950s but adopting a community church model, the church prides itself in doctrinal diversity. On any particular day, one might discuss theology with an individual of the Calvinistic persuasion and within minutes have a conversation with a person inclined toward Arminianism.

The church has a storied tradition of foreign missions engagement but has not given sufficient attention to individuals in the neighboring cities and adjacent communities. Current leadership senses God's leading to become more intentional in implementing ministry that intentionally seeks to love the people of the capital region of New York by serving the marginalized, ministering to the poor and needy while also rubbing shoulders with the influential and well-credentialed decision-makers of New York's capital. Gospel preaching continues to be the foundation of the Sunday morning experience. A blend of modern and traditional worship was adopted by the church's leadership nearly two decades ago.

Externally the ministry appears to display general health and relative missional effectiveness. Church attendance has remained relatively stable over the past decade. The church is looked on favorably by outsiders, has a positive witness in the surrounding community, and area churches are appreciative of efforts made to strengthen their own ministries.

More in-depth analysis reveals, however, several areas of concern. There is a sense of entitlement among some senior saints, particularly those who once held prominent leadership

roles. Pockets of individuals voicing criticism exist as they glorify perceived past successes. Older persons often complain that the music is too modern and too loud, that the church's ministry has shifted too much to engage young families, and that financial giving has declined because younger generations are not as faithful in this area as their parents and grandparents.

A confused church government structure is another challenging issue significantly impacting the church's health and ability to be more missionally active. Constitutionally and widely believed, the church is elder led. However, in practice, it more closely resembles a hybrid model consisting of elder oversight infused with congregational involvement. Many important decisions of church direction are impacted by congregational vote, held at an annual meeting in June. Parishioners vote on the annual operating budget, and the new slate of elders is presented each ministry year. Changes to programming, and any directional change in ministry focus, necessitate congregational approval.

Each of the areas of concern and barrier to missional effectiveness addressed above stem from an ineffective and dysfunctional governing board. The church's leadership team is comprised of elderly leaders, most of whom are at retirement age or beyond, who are risk-averse, far too eager to please their own constituencies, and unwilling to embrace a new missional approach toward ministry. This challenge is compounded by an unwillingness to include new and younger leaders in the roster of men elected as elders.

Presently the elder selection process is broken or at least ineffective. The current approach begins with populating a sub-committee comprised of sitting elders who will then establish a list of potential leaders who can be invited to serve as elders. Objective standards are not readily employed. Typically, this list comprises leaders known personally by members of the

sub-committee. For several years, the result has been that elders are simply recycled through the system. Leaders who have served previously are granted first place on the list of potential elders. Another criterion employed regards age and experience. Those who are more advanced in age are deemed more desirable than those who are younger.

In the author's judgment, a compromised leadership structure is the basis for much of the church's lack of health and stagnancy. Over the past ten years, the congregation has recycled through the same list of elders while also failing to train and appoint younger leaders. The church simply does not follow an intentional strategy for discipling and raising up leaders who will work collaboratively, cooperatively, and collegially to ensure the fulfillment of the church's mission. A plan must be implemented to ensure every individual is discipled adequately before being considered for leadership and, second, to establish a pathway where leaders are developed. Leaders who are mature disciples of Jesus and who have gone through an intentional leadership training process will best be equipped to face both the ongoing challenges and the future difficulties the church will face.

Tony Morgan outlines seven reasons why churches fail to develop leaders:

> (1) Your ministry calendar is so packed with events that you have no margin for leadership development. (2) The senior pastor looks to one or maybe two people to lead the entire church. (3) No one owns the role of leadership development. (4) Low-capacity leaders have been promoted to high-capacity leadership positions. (5) You have built a culture that only permits "professionals" to do ministry. (6) You delegate tasks but never empower others to lead. (7) Your team has unhealthy spans of care.[1]

1. Tony Morgan, "Demystifying Leadership Development: 7 Reasons You Don't Have More Leaders," *Tony Morgan Live*, October 29, 2018, accessed December 21, 2021, https://tonymorganlive.com/2018/10/29/demystifying-leadership-development-7-reasons-dont-have-more-leaders/.

At least three of the reasons, namely numbers 1, 3, and 4, help to clarify why leadership development has been consistently absent in the ministry mentioned above. Perhaps, though, the most destructive tendency impeding a leadership pathway has been the presence of a culture where "low-capacity leaders have been promoted to high-capacity leadership positions." Greater value has been assigned to how long an individual has attended the church: the longer the tenure, the higher the appraisal. In practice, one's capacity or effectiveness fails to guide in the process of selecting and appointing leaders.

Even more concerning, though, is the practice of promoting individuals to positions for which they will never be prepared. There is a history of granting prospective leaders a title or position of leadership in hopes that they will live into that responsibility. How much better would it be to ensure those individuals already live into the responsibility and only then grant them a title? Sadly, when concerns regarding a particular candidate's competency, chemistry, or even character have been expressed by pastoral staff, fellow elders have dismissed those concerns and urged the group to "Grow him!"[2]

Implementation of a trial leadership training model is the focus of this thesis-project. The project will seek to answer the question: Will entrenched leaders accept the next generation into eldership if the young leaders go through an extensive leadership training and coaching forum?

I contend that implementing a leadership pathway will begin allowing younger leaders the opportunity to serve as elders. Intensive training modules will be held with approximately ten to twelve individuals who appear to possess the capacity for leadership responsibility. Once

2. This exact statement was conveyed by an elder at a monthly board meeting in the Spring of 2015. Unfortunately, the person was appointed to the board and proceeded to bring substantial division among both the elders as well as certain members of the congregation.

completed, the training module will move toward a coaching element where those interested will continue meeting and relating to me for further leadership development.

This Thesis-Project

This project intends to implement a more desirable means of actively cultivating leaders by intentionally discipling, training, and vetting each of them for the role of elder. The current chapter has outlined the underlying problem preventing younger persons from serving in vital leadership offices.

I defend that thesis in a three-part theological framework in chapter two. The first section of the framework will explore several Old Testament characters who exemplify leadership capacity, particularly personalities who serve as examples of failure. A second segment of the framework will focus on the incarnational ministry of Jesus, namely how He modeled servant leadership. The final section of the theological framework will highlight the selection of effective leadership personnel, explore the attributes and qualities necessary for leadership, detail the purpose and responsibility of the leader to accomplish the mission of the church as evidenced in the New Testament record.

In chapter three, various literary pieces will be analyzed and evaluated to gain a robust understanding of contemporary research and dialogue concerning leadership. The literature analysis will focus on past and present textbooks, church curriculums, and secular leadership tools. Literary materials that examine specifically the inner life of leaders, adaptive leadership, and the role of shepherding the congregation will be highlighted as a means of comprehending helpful paradigms fostering organizational health and change. The review will seek to establish a

solid understanding of church culture, its significant impact on missional success, and the all-important role of leaders in shaping, bringing change to, and establishing a healthy culture.

Then in chapter four, I will set forth the project, which began with a previously established cohort of individuals who have not previously served in leadership and who agreed to meet weekly to discuss, research, and grow in their capacity as leaders. A pre-class assessment will be given to each participant to ascertain their knowledge and preparedness for leadership in the local church. Once completed, the assessment will assist in determining content for leadership training. The eight-week training module, with the already established cohort, will be launched. The final session of the module will include an evaluation tool helpful in determining if the training has begun to empower and equip the participants for leadership responsibilities in the local church. The desire is that the training modules will be easily reproduced in other local congregations to prepare laypersons to exercise courageous, adaptive, and Christ-like leadership. Monthly coaching sessions aimed at providing continual support and instruction will follow the eight-week training modules. Coaching seminars will span four months and will be held in a one-on-one setting and address both the personal and professional lives of the participants. Once coaching has been completed, a final assessment will be conducted to determine how well the training is being implemented in the life and work of the leader.

The final chapter of the thesis will review the outcomes of project implementation. My expectation is that the pre-assessment given to the small group of individuals selected for future leadership roles will reveal a relatively short season (3 – 5 years) of engagement in the life of the church and a lack of previous intentional leadership training. I envisage that both the post-

training and post-coaching evaluations will reveal a substantial increase in preparedness and desire for engaging in leadership roles within the church organization.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis-project seeks to evaluate whether leadership training and coaching will equip younger leaders and ultimately enhance the possibility of their being chosen to serve on the church board. This chapter delineates some of the leadership concepts, models, and characteristics outlined in the biblical record. The review is divided into three sections that will undergird the implementation of the project: (1) leadership illustrations from the Old Testament, (2) Jesus on leadership, and (3) leadership in the early New Testament Church. Each of these topics should have a strong bearing on the development of leaders.

Leadership Illustrations from the Old Testament

Lessons in Failure

Someone has stated, "It's good to learn from our failures, but it's an even better thing to learn from someone else's failures."[1] Much can be learned in the development of leaders by studying the failures of leaders. Perhaps no greater examples can be presented than Samson and King Saul.

The Strongest Man Who Ever Lived

The story of Samson opens with remarkable excitement and great expectancy. Something wonderful is going to happen because of his entrance into the world. An angelic proclamation is

1. Heard many times over the years. Not aware of original source.

given to Samson's parents: "Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."[2] Only three men in the biblical record are ascribed the honor of serving as Nazarites from birth – Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. Nazarites were to be set apart for God's special use. Three prohibitions were required of those selected to serve as Nazarites. Judges 13:4-5 announce these restrictions. Hair was not to be cut but allowed to grow out. No wine or strong drink was to be consumed. Finally, contact with a corpse was to be avoided.[3]

But just a few verses later, Samson demands of his father that a certain woman from the very nation who was oppressing the Israelites be chosen to be his wife. Samson's request stands in direct disobedience to God's commands. His tragic words ring with a rejection of God's plan for Samson's life: "I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get her for me as my wife."[4]

At least five leadership principles can be gleaned from Samson's disastrous life. A refusal to seek God's guidance is one lesson we see illustrated in this Old Testament character's life. Unfortunately, it is also true of so many of the lives of God's people. Prayer is absent for the entirety of Samson's life. A notable exception comes when, in the final moments of his life, Samson begs God to grant him strength one last time so that he can destroy his Philistine opposition. Judges 16 contains the only recorded interaction between Samson and God. Before

2. Judges 13:5. All scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

3. Judges 13:4-5.

4. Judges 14:2.

thousands of the Philistine enemy, Samson cries out, "O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes."[5] Samson's tragic plea serves as a powerful warning for leaders not to neglect prayer and seeking the wisdom of God. One cannot miss, however, the awesome redemptive grace of our great God in granting Samson's request. The record reads that "the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life."[6] Even as we note the disappointment of Samson's leadership, we are awestruck by the grace of God at work in the lives of those He calls to lead His people.

Samson's unwillingness to listen to the counsel of those closest to him, particularly his parents, provides another lesson in failure. Chapter 14 outlines the interaction between Samson and his parents as they are confronted with his request for a Philistine wife. Manoah, Samson's father, states, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?"[7] Samson's demanding response hints at his inability to heed the guidance of others. Subsequently, we are informed that Samson's parents were unaware that God was orchestrating the event in order to punish the Philistines. However, we are not led to believe that Samson had any premonition of God's plan. It appears that Samson was determined to make his own way without help and

5. Judges 16:28.

6. Judges 16:30.

7. Judges 14:3a.

guidance from others. Samson seems to view his parents simply as conduits to get what he desires.[8]

Stephen Covey, known for his best-seller *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, wisely states, "Seek first to understand, then to be understood."[9] Although this habit benefits anyone wishing to be a more effective communicator, leaders profit most from this practice. A 2017 Forbes study of 577 leaders revealed that those possessing a strong preference toward listening ranked considerably higher in effectiveness than their counterparts who preferred speaking.[10]

A final lesson from the sad tale of Samson's life is his repeated sexual gratification. Admittedly some of the exhilaration found in the narrative is due to the tremendous heights of Samson's experience. Unfortunately, those highs are offset by descending into the lowest depths. Repeatedly the reader is stunned by Samson's lack of spiritual and emotional stability. His life appears strikingly similar to a theme park ride where the adventurous rider endures the high peaks and the low valleys of a roller-coaster. Readers of this account are first confronted with Samson's propensity toward lust when reading his rationale for selecting a Philistine wife. Samson stated, "She is right in my eyes."[11] Perhaps Samson's search for sexual fulfillment is most

8. See again Samson's words to his father, "get her for me," Judges 14:3.

9. Stephen Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 235.

10. Jack Zenger, "Listening and Speaking: The Leader's Paradox," August 17, 2017, accessed August 24, 2020, http://www.forbes.com/sites/jackzenger/2017/08/17/listening-and-speaking-the-leaders-paradox.

11. Judges 14:3.

evidenced when noting the remarkable account of his slaughtering 1000 Philistine soldiers as detailed in chapter 15, but moments later is found in a sexual encounter with Delilah.[12]

Contemporary illustrations abound of those who, serving as leaders of God's people, have sought to fulfill their sexual pleasures. Perhaps the digital and social media age has shed light on the private lives of Christian leaders in a way not previously possible, accounting for the surge in the surplus of fallen church leaders. However, the biblical record reveals the struggle with "lust of the eye" throughout human history. Modern-day leaders would do well to heed the warning given by the life of Samson.

The People's Choice

Saul was Israel's first king, and his own people elected him. Saul's life is a study in failure. Several significant lessons can be gleaned from observing King Saul's fall from grace.

Like many before and since, Saul began well. The biblical record informs us that Saul was a good man with excellent leadership potential. Saul's story begins in 1 Samuel 9 with the following statement: "And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people."[13] Many leaders have stood tall among their peers, but this was a physical reality for Saul. He was physically larger and more handsome than all his counterparts. Saul's charming, good looks and imposing presence created the impression that he was the most qualified to lead the Israelite nation. When Samuel the prophet introduced Saul to

12. See, in particular, Judges 15:15, 16, and Judges 16:1.

13. 1 Samuel 9:2.

the nation, the following occurred: "And Samuel said to all the people, 'Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? There is none like him among all the people.' And all the people shouted, 'Long live the king!'"[14]

Further evidence that Saul's capacity to lead was not doomed from the very beginning can be seen just a few chapters later. First Samuel 14 provides a summary of Saul's ability to lead as King:

> When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned he routed them. And he did valiantly and struck the Amalekites and delivered Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.[15]

Scripture leads the reader to believe that Saul was a solid and wise choice to lead the people of Israel. At this point in the story, there is no evidence to believe anything other than that the people had chosen wisely. Sadly, Saul's lack of integrity and propensity to leadership failure is suddenly introduced into his story.

The biblical record does not tell us why Saul failed so quickly and miserably. Some have suggested that his rise to prominence was too sudden. Hawkins and Parrott write, "Saul, Israel's first king, began as an unknown donkey wrangler (1 Sam 9:1-10:16). He went from total obscurity to the pinnacle of leadership. Maybe the climb was too high, too fast. He was not able to handle it, and it went to his head."[16] Perhaps it was a situation where Saul's "character was

14. 1 Samuel 10:24.

15. 1 Samuel 14:47-48.

16. Ralph K. Hawkins and Richard Leslie Parrot, *Leadership Lessons: Avoiding the Pitfalls of King Saul* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2013), 25.

outpaced by his promotion in position."[17] The biblical account simply reveals that Saul increasingly began to reject God's leading while making unilateral decisions to benefit himself.[18]

One of King Saul's most glaring flaws was a continual refusal to acknowledge his mistakes and repent of wrongdoing.[19] Saul's unwillingness to admit and repent of wrongdoing is evidenced earlier in his reign when he wrongly usurped Samuel the prophet's role by offering a burnt sacrifice to God. The account is told in 1 Samuel:

> As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came. And Saul went out to meet him and greet him. Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the favor of the Lord.' So I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering." And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you." And Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal. The rest of the people went up after Saul to meet the army; they went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.[20]

Neither in the above account nor anywhere subsequently is there a mention that Saul felt remorse or admitted to and sought repentance for his sinful choice to offer the sacrifice. The obvious question is, "what if Saul had humbled himself by admitting his sin, sought God's forgiveness (and those individuals he sinned against), and repented of his actions?"[21]

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17. Someone once stated that one of the great problems of leaders is that they can be "promoted beyond their character."

18. Through His prophet Samuel who Saul was to rely on in order to receive God's counsel.

19. Hawkins and Parrott, *Leadership Lessons*, 179-187.

20. 1 Samuel 13:10-15.

21. A similar question is posed in Hawkins and Parrott's book *Leadership Lessons*, 179.

Another instance where Saul refused to admit wrong occurred when he directly disobeyed God's command that all Amalekites be destroyed.[22] Saul unilaterally chose to spare the Amalekite King Agag. The biblical account provides the following commentary: "But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fattened calves and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them. All that was despised and worthless they devoted to destruction."[23] Later, when Samuel confronted King Saul for this sin, Saul further refused to confess his sin and seek forgiveness when he blamed the people he ruled over.[24] An ominous pronouncement by the prophet follows Saul's adamant refusal to repent: "And Samuel said to him, 'The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.'"[25]

And here just as significant as the failure to confess and repent of sin was Saul's refusal to consult God when making leadership decisions.[26] One account in the narrative reveals Saul's initial desire for God's guidance but then opting instead to follow his own best judgment. First Samuel 14 details an account where the Philistine nation had erected a fort in a significant location that impeded the nation of Israel's ability to conquer the land. The narrative recounts Saul's inability to decide how to proceed and what to do about the Philistine fortress. So, while Saul's son Jonathan proceeded to attack the Philistine stronghold, Saul vacillated in uncertainty.

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22. 1 Samuel 15:1-3.

23. 1 Samuel 15:9.

24. "But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal," 1 Samuel 15:21.

25. 1 Samuel 15:28.

26. The following is my adaptation from a section from Hawkins and Parrott's book *Leadership Lessons*, 197-220.

Verses 18 and 19 read, "So Saul said to Ahijah, 'Bring the ark of God here.' For the ark of God went at that time with the people of Israel. Now while Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines increased more and more. So Saul said to the priest, 'Withdraw your hand.'" The phrase, "withdraw your hand," is Saul's way of instructing the priest not to proceed with consulting God for wisdom in how to respond to the Philistine battle. When given the opportunity to consult God, Saul backed out at the last minute.

Later, in the same account, the Philistine soldiers flee for their lives as King Saul's army pursues them. When Saul commands his army to chase after and destroy the entire Philistine army, it is the priest who counsels Saul to seek God's guidance. The account states, "And Saul inquired of God, 'Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?' But he did not answer him that day."[27] In a fitting picture of King Saul's lack of self-awareness before God, Saul makes the mistaken assumption that someone in his army has sinned, thus God will not now reveal His will. Lots are cast, and it is disclosed that Jonathan has failed to adhere to his father's foolish curse on any soldier who eats until all Philistine soldiers are destroyed.[28] In this instance of casting lots, Saul sought not God's counsel but a means of knowing who had disobeyed his rash vow that no soldier eat during the long and arduous battle. Scripture outlines only these two accounts as instances when Saul consulted God. The first scenario revealed Saul failing to follow through and seek God's direction. The second account displays Saul's true motive in seeking self-preservation rather than guidance from God.[29]

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27. 1 Samuel 14:37.

28. 1 Samuel 14:38-44.

29. Hawkins and Parrott, *Leadership Lessons,* 198-203.

Drawing on Saul's leadership failure, one notes that leaders must become men and women who readily and fully embrace their tendency to err and make mistakes. It is imperative that leaders admit sin, confess it, and seek repentance. Would Saul's life and reign looked dramatically different had he chosen to own his failures humbly? Yes, one believes that the outcome would have been vastly different. But leaders, in recognition of their human limitations, must also continually consult God for wisdom, direction, and strength. Authors Hawkins and Parrott agree, "To face the daunting task of leadership without the resources of God's presence and guidance is not only arrogant but also foolhardy."[30]

An Example to Follow: David the Great

Perhaps no leader in Jewish history is more widely known and appreciated than King David. James Hastings writes regarding David and his place in Israel's history,

> He is not simply the greatest of her kings; he is the man great in everything. He monopolizes all her institutions. He is her shepherd boy – the representative of her toiling classes. He is her musician – the successor of Jubal and Miriam and Deborah. He is her soldier – the conqueror of Goliaths that would steal her peace. He is her king – numbering her armies and regulating her polity. He is her priest – substituting a broken and contrite spirit for the blood of bulls and rams. He is her prophet – presaging with his last breath the everlastingness of his kingdom. He is her poet – most of her psalms are called by his name.[31]

But David is also arguably one of the most influential leaders of all human history. David's reign brought peace to the area surrounding the Hebrew nation and advancement in trade, commerce, and the arts. Ancient carvings and texts in nations that surrounded Israel display the

30. Hawkins and Parrot, *Leadership Lessons,* 199.

31. James Hastings, *The Greater Men and Women of the Bible* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914), 113, HathiTrust, accessed January 14, 2022, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175001961849&view=1up&seq=9&skin=2021.

presence of Hebraic music, poetry, and commerce.[32] David plays a prominent role in the biblical record as well. More is written about the person of David than any other individual except Jesus. Several examples illustrate this truth: Jerusalem is referred to as the "city of David." Jesus is continually described as the Son of David. When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary the birth of God's Son, he stated that God would give Jesus "the throne of His father David."

The Making of a Leader

Before God assigns a leadership role, He often sidelines the individual in order to navigate them through an intentional leadership training regimen. The biblical account of David's rise to become one of Israel's greatest kings reveals how God makes his leaders. Readers are first introduced to David in 1 Samuel 16. God has rejected Israel's first King Saul and is now preparing to select a replacement. God instructs the prophet, Samuel, to anoint one of the sons of Jesse the Bethlehemite.[33] That account proceeds to disclose how each of Jesse's sons was rebuffed by God until the youngest, David, was called from the fields. As the youngest, David was overlooked and deemed too insignificant to include in Samuel's kingly anointing. However, the reader notes God's contrasting selection process as detailed in verse seven, "For the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."[34] David is subsequently selected as Israel's next king.

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32. James Montgomery Boice, *Ordinary Men Called by God: Abraham, Moses, and David* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1988), 104-105.

33. 1 Samuel 16:1.

34. 1 Samuel 16:7.

Before David could be entrusted with the throne of Israel, God needed to train him. He was first trained in obscurity and in solitude while tending sheep in the fields. F. B. Meyer, referring to this time in David's life, writes,

> Nature was David's nurse, his companion, his teacher…. The moorlands around Bethlehem, forming the greater part of the Judean plateau do not, however, present features of soft beauty; but are wild, gaunt and strong character-breeding. There shepherds have always led and watched their flocks; and there David first imbibed that knowledge of natural scenery and of pastoral pursuits which coloured all his after-life and his poetry, as the contents of the vat of the dyer's hand. Such were the schools and schoolmasters of his youth.[35]

Many people struggle with living in obscurity. They want to make a difference, to exert their influence on society, and be in meaningful relationships with others. Times of solitude and isolation are not readily embraced. But there must be times of withdrawal, where solitude and obscurity become trusted companions. There must be breaks from the routine, from relationships, and from the demands of the world in order to be alone with God so that Jesus can form them, molding them into the individuals and leaders He desires them to be.

Samuel's interaction with David's father, Jesse, exposes the fact that Jesse had to be prompted to remember his youngest son. Even after Samuel had asked to meet all of his sons, David's participation needed to be demanded. Evidently, as a boy, David was relegated to sheep tending while his brothers were off on exciting adventures. However, far from fortuitous, God designed and used these experiences to draw David's heart to himself, to sharpen his sensitivity toward God and the things of God.

Chuck Swindoll writes, "Men and women of God, servant-leaders in the making, are first unknown, unseen, unappreciated, and applauded. In the relentless demands of obscurity,

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35. F. B. Meyer, *David* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1953), 12-13.

character is built. Strange as it may seem, those who first accept the silence of obscurity are best qualified to handle the applause of popularity."[36]

God did not limit leadership development to David's young adult phase but instead intensified that training as the time drew nearer for David to assume the throne. David's years as a fugitive from Saul stand out as highly formative. First Samuel 21 and 22 indicate that while David fled from King Saul, he needed to constantly move from one location to the next, for Saul always became aware of David's whereabouts. One can conclude that during this period of exile, David would have been very lonely and vulnerable at being hated so vehemently by the King he faithfully served. Even more astounding is the realization that David's current predicament remains unchanged for thirteen or fourteen years. Readers of this narrative note that David often only had God. So, it is with those who God calls to lead His people.

David's Prayer Life

Many of David's Psalms were written during periods of rejection and regularly start by depicting his emotional distress. David tends to cry out to his God from a posture of fear, disappointment, or anger. However, each time, his writing would end on a note of hope as David focused his thoughts and attention on who God is even more than what God does. Psalm 13 is a clear example of David's spiritual journey:

> How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death, lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him," lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken. But I have trusted in your steadfast

36. Charles R. Swindoll, *Great Lives: David: A Man of Passion and Destiny* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 1997), 10.

> love, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.[37]

Leaders of any age would do well to adopt David's approach in times of adversity and disappointment. Feelings of failure, disappointment, isolation, and rejection are best directed at the One who alone can bring encouragement and strength. Jesus invites individuals who are weighed down with the hardship of life to come and find peace in Him. Matthew 11:28 reads, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."[38] David knew this principle centuries before Jesus' incarnation. Psalm after Psalm indicates how David carried his troubles to God and he found renewal and reaffirmation of God's presence.

David's prayer's life provides a vivid illustration of how individuals leading God's people can effectively cope with the pressure of leadership. First Samuel 23 describes an instance where David and his band of misfits managed to defeat the Philistine army, all while being pursued by Saul and the Israelite soldiers.[39] Readers of this narrative note that David's first action was to inquire of the Lord, a fitting response by God-called leaders as they face leadership dilemmas. David was to attack the Philistines. But when human counsel contradicted the guidance given by God, David once again sought God's wisdom. God reassured David that he had heard correctly the first time. Despite the apprehension of his army, David obediently followed God's command, thus securing a great victory and exemplifying the benefit of prayerful devotion to Christ.[40]

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37. Psalm 13.

38. Matthew 11:28.

39. For the full account see 1 Samuel 23:1-5.

40. Mary Nelle Schaap, *David's Lord: Seeing God in the Life of David* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 61-62.

Like David, the men and women who serve in leadership must be faithful in seeking God through prayer. Those individuals who have experienced training similar to King David's are acutely aware of their need to be prayerfully dependent on Jesus. Conversely, those who have been promoted and given the mantle of leadership without first embracing God-dependency only learned through isolation and obscurity are desperately ill-prepared to lead in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus on Leadership

Servanthood

Jesus does not just offer a good illustration of leadership; he provides the ultimate example of leadership. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus defined how He would fulfill His earthly mission. He stated, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."[41] "For Jesus, the model of leadership was servanthood. He was never self-serving. He led first as a servant to His Father in Heaven, who gave Him his mission."[42] Every word, action, and motive of Jesus revolved around fulfilling the mission of His Father. Jesus' primary objective was fulfilling that mission.

Jesus' servant leadership example contradicts most leadership models we see emulated both in the religious and secular sphere. For some, "servant" and "leader" seem mutually

41. Mark 10:45.

42. C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Discovering the Secrets of Servant Leadership from the Life of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998), 10.

exclusive. Yet in the Kingdom of God, they go together, hand in hand. Leaders in the church must interact with those they interact with as servants.

Those who wish to be servant leaders must, as Jesus modeled, serve the mission God has given them. "True servant leadership begins when the leader humbles himself to carry out the mission entrusted to him rather than his personal agenda."[43] Humility translates into serving those around you, particularly those on the journey to accomplish the mission. Pastor Wilkes states, "While serving the mission, the servant leader becomes a servant to those who have joined him when he provides adequate vision, direction, correction, and resources to carry out the mission entrusted to the group. The leader serves when he equips others and 'teams' with them to reach the goal of the mission together."[44] Servant leadership is not possible until the one leading first submits their life to, and in turn learns to serve, the One true God – Jesus.

Self-Denial

In order to submit to Christ, leaders must acknowledge that God has a divine purpose and plan for their lives. Leaders come to know this purpose through a personal relationship with Christ. Jesus best explains how one submits to God in Matthew. He stated, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me."[45] "Denying self – not embracing self – is the first step to becoming a servant leader…. If you desire to lead as Jesus

43. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership,* 18.

44. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership,* 19.

45. Luke 9:23.

led, you must desire first to follow Jesus; this is how leadership training among God's people begins."[46]

The apostle Paul encouraged the Philippian Christians to serve each other by detailing the humility of the second Person of the Trinity. Paul holds Christ's example up as deserving of being replicated. He writes,

> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.[47]

Jesus left the glory and majesty of Heaven to take on the task of servanthood. He never sought personal fame or acknowledgment from other people. Jesus sought only to fulfill the mission His father had given Him. The life and ministry of Jesus is a gripping illustration of humble service to others. Leaders who wish to lead and influence others in the Kingdom of God must have a similar Christ-like attitude. Henry Nouwen further clarifies Christ's example to those who lead; or, better said, serve the people of God. Nouwen writes,

> The way of the Christian leader is not the way of upward mobility in which our world has invested so much, but the way of downward mobility ending on the cross. This might sound morbid and masochistic, but for those who have heard the voice of the first love and said "yes" to it, the downward-moving way of Jesus is the way to the joy and peace of God, a joy and peace that is not of this world. Here we touch the most important quality of Christian leadership in the future. It is not a leadership of power and control, but leadership of powerlessness and humility in which the suffering servant of God, Jesus Christ, is made manifest.[48]

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46. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership,* 23.

47. Philippians 2:5-8.

48. Henry J. M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 62-63.

Leaders should live in a posture of humble surrender and worship to Christ so that, in turn, they can humbly serve those around them. Leading in this manner will require they be in conflict with, even run counter-cultural to the world's definition of successful leadership. One way of assisting leaders to be aware if they are leading through humble service is to seek regular input and assessments from those they lead.

Several practical implications for leaders arise from a study of Jesus' teaching and ministry.[49] Leaders who seek to lead through servanthood will forsake the temptation to advance themselves and allow God to exalt them. In Luke 14:7-11, Jesus encouraged His disciples to avoid seats of honor when accepting an invitation to a banquet:

> Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."[50]

Those who seek to lead in God's Kingdom wait for God to choose the persons He desires to seat in places of leadership. Many leaders are high achievers and may find it challenging to wait for a leadership promotion even while acknowledging the truth that God sovereignly selects those He wishes to lead His people.

Jesus presents another leadership lesson in Mark 10:32-40 when James and John request to sit on Christ's right and left when He enters His kingdom. Jesus responded to His disciples:

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49. See Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 25-27 for seven leadership principles. I only present three of the seven.

50. Luke 14:7-11.

> And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."[51]

Individuals who would lead must not seek position but instead focus on following their Lord. John and James did not fully grasp the implications of Jesus' rebuke but would later understand and embrace the principle once He ascended to Heaven. Leading in Christ's Kingdom requires that leaders find strength and guidance through a personal, intimate relationship with the God of the universe.

Serving those Being Led

Perhaps one of the more challenging principles Jesus modeled, while also encouraging His followers to adopt as well, is pictured in His act of foot washing. John 13:3-15 reads,

> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet. but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean." When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord

51. Mark 10:32-40.

> and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you."

John 13 remarkably records this climactic event just hours before the crucifixion. Jesus stepped away from His place at the table and stooped to the level of a servant and assumed the task of washing guests' feet.

Upon completing this humbling and gracious act, He stated, "For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you."[52] More than performing a crude act of ministry to His arrogant disciples, Jesus established a principle for all who lead in the kingdom of God – leaders must be willing to serve, even in the lowliest of ways, those they lead. If they are not kneeling at the feet of others and washing their feet, then, metaphorically, they are in the wrong posture. Jesus' words are a clarion call to all leaders that they must symbolically wash the feet of those they lead.

Some have compared servant leadership to competing in team sports as compared to individuals who golf. Golfers need only be concerned with themselves. Whereas those who participate on a team must ensure that their team members are equally prepared, inspired, and trained to win.[53] One remarkable attribute Jesus displayed as a leader is how invested He was in involving others, mainly His disciples, in fulfilling the mission assigned to Him by the Father.[54]

Team-Based Leadership

52. John 13:15.

53. Unsure of source. Heard in a lecture years ago.

54. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 211.

Mark chapter six is instructive in how Jesus established a team who would assist in accomplishing His mission:

> Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."[55]

Although, as God, Jesus needed no assistance, He willingly and strategically involved the disciples. Throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus investing His time, His energy, and Himself in others. Leadership, as in discipleship, cannot be accomplished apart from significant investment in people's lives.

Four key phrases in the above passage assist us in understanding Jesus' inclusion of the disciples. We note first that Jesus "called the twelve." Jesus interrupted their lives and plans by inviting them to become a part of something greater – the mission of God. Leaders must invite others to accomplish Christ's mission. Secondly, we notice the call is "to Him." Jesus called the disciples not to the mission but to Himself. In the same way, leaders must invite those they lead to join them in fulfilling the mission. We then read that Jesus "sent them out" in groups of two. This step not only multiplied Jesus' leadership but also provided valuable training experience and a practical opportunity to own the execution of the mission. Leaders grasp the important truth that teams of people are the most effective means to do God's work. Finally, we note the phrase, He "gave them authority over unclean spirits." Jesus was strategic in empowering and providing the resources His followers needed.[56]

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55. Mark 6:7-11 (NIV).
56. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 212-216.

The Gospel accounts reveal how seldom Jesus ministered alone. Whatever the Son of God was doing, He sought the presence of His disciples. In most scenarios, at least three disciples were present with Jesus. The continual exposure to God's mission by being present with Jesus ensured that the disciples both owned the mission and would strive to accomplish it once Jesus ascended to Heaven.

The Head of the Church

Acts 20:28 informs us that Jesus purchased the church with His own blood shed on the cross: "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood." Paul, in this passage, carefully outlined the primary responsibilities for elders to the Ephesians leaders. He emphasized the significance of Christ having purchased the church as the basis for the faithful and meticulous way elders are to lead congregations. This truth is, on the one hand exhilarating in that Jesus redeemed His people not by a monetary payment but by the shedding of His own precious blood, and elders are privileged to be a part of this marvelous work. On the other hand, it reveals the gravity of eldering a local congregation. Regardless of the challenge each individual presents in being cared for and led, the individual has been purchased by the costly blood of God the Son.

Jesus is also the master builder. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says, "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Leaders are reassured that Jesus, as the builder of the church, is ultimately responsible for the advancement, growth, and success of the church. He will not be deterred. His mission will be

accomplished. His plans will not fail. This promise emboldens church leaders. Jesus will continue to build His church, adding millions and millions of persons to her number.

Further, Jesus is the Head of the church. Ephesians 1:22 states, "And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church." The church is not presided over by a president, prime minister, human king, or religious leader; that is exclusively the role of the second Person of the Trinity. He is her only Head. Dwelling on this truth helps stabilize leaders in moments of success as well as in the challenges of ministry. A leader's ego is also kept in check as they reflect on the knowledge that Jesus is the sole Head of the church.

Finally, all power and dominion has been given to Jesus in the completion of God's redemptive work of humanity. First Peter 3:22 reads, "[Jesus Christ] has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him." Jesus leads and rules over the church through the power of God's Holy Spirit. After Jesus' resurrection, the Scriptures inform us that He appeared to more than five hundred individuals to bolster their resolve in accomplishing His Great Commission. Once these instances occurred, Jesus ascended to Heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father. This signifies that not only is the work of redemption completed but also that Jesus is now reigning over God's Kingdom from the locus of authority – God's right hand. Acknowledging this provides no small comfort, for Jesus possesses all authority on earth and in heaven. Though they decry their limitless power, human leaders are subject to the One who has all authority. Further attestation of this is evidenced in Jesus' commission of His disciples. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[57]

Leaders in the church are to be encouraged when they ponder the seemingly impossible task of "making disciples of all nations." Those serving in the local church can sometimes lose sight of Who assigned the task and especially in Whose authority this awesome goal is performed. "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me" means exactly what it states: Jesus' authority regarding the advancement of His Kingdom and the success of the church's mission is limitless.

Leadership in the Early New Testament Church

Selecting Elders

The New Testament does not provide an exhaustive list of answers to all questions regarding elders, but it does offer sufficient evidence to confirm elders leading within the local church. Acts 14 defines how elders are selected for service. Verse 23 of that chapter reads, "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed." In this passage, Paul and Barnabas appoint elders in each church they visit. How many churches are included in this description is not revealed, but it is important to note that they were not elected by the congregation but by Paul and Barnabas. Further, this pattern of appointing elders is evidenced throughout the New Testament.

57. Matthew 28:18-20.

Another helpful piece of information regarding the selection of elders in the New Testament is found in Paul's emotional farewell address to the leaders in Ephesus. Acts 20:28 reads, "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood." Paul's exhortation includes the significant role played by the Holy Spirit in selecting elders. Perhaps like the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Acts 13, the Holy Spirit guides which individuals should be appointed as the church fasts and prays. Early church appointment of elders was more about the Spirit of God's direction than personal human interests.

The student of the New Testament notes that elders were from within the specific local church and were trained and developed over some time, perhaps even years. These prospective leaders were selected because of their evidenced spiritual growth and maturity.

The Primacy of Godly Character

Although all believers are admonished to "be holy, for I am holy," the call to holiness is undeniably required for church leaders.[58] Godly character is the primary distinctive of those who would lead God's people. Both 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 begin the list of leader characteristics with character or being without reproach.[59] First Peter 3 provides another abbreviated list of characteristics for church leaders. Righteous character is an undergirding implication of each attribute set forth in the 1 Peter 3 passage.

58. 1 Peter 1:16.

59. 1 Timothy 3:1, "Therefore an overseer must be above reproach." Titus 1:6, "If anyone is above reproach."

Characteristics of Elders

A compilation of three New Testament passages identifies key traits which serve as crucial identifiers for what elders/leaders must look like, namely, 1 Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3. Paul's letter to the younger Timothy states,

> Therefore, an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.[60]

Later, in Paul's writing to Titus, he outlines other qualities that must be observed in the lives of those who lead:

> If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.[61]

First Peter 5:1-4 further addresses the role of elders in the local church:

> I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory.[62]

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60. 1 Timothy 3:2-7.

61. Titus 1:6-9.

62. 1 Peter 5:1-4.

There are several indispensable qualities outlined in the passages above that must be practically evident in the life of a church leader. "Above reproach" speaks about an individual's reputation, how others describe the person. The apostle further clarifies in verse 7 that a leader's godly reputation must be evident not only before those in the faith but also those outside of it.

The next characteristic, "husband of one wife," has garnered much attention and various interpretations throughout church history. Some have understood the phrase to exclude any leader who has previously been divorced. Because of its position in the list of attributes – it follows immediately after the foundational aspect of being "above reproach" – some interpreters understand the phrase to refer to moral purity.[63] The implication is that if a man cannot be faithful to his wife, he will not be found faithful in a ministerial or leadership assignment.

The third and fourth attributes, "Sober-minded" and "self-control," point to the importance that leaders be self-controlled and disciplined. Leaders are to be disciplined people who are in control of their emotions and desires, filled with God's Spirit while also leading with caution, steadfastness, and a temperate mindset. Galatians 5 also mentions "self-control" as a fruit of the Spirit.[64]

The leader is to be "respectable," referring to one's manner of living – devout, godly, and a doer of good. The implication is that elders are to possess unquestionable integrity so that

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63. Gene A. Getz, *Elders and Leaders: God's Plan for Leading the Church* (Moody Publishers: Chicago, 2003), 97.

64. Galatians 5:23.

others can follow their example while also finding it difficult to bring an accusation against them regarding character.[65]

"Hospitable" signifies that the leader seeks ways to minister and care for others, particularly strangers. All who claim to be Christ-followers are to display hospitality, but leaders must especially be so, opening their homes, sharing their food, and showing kindness to others.

Elders must have some ability "to teach." They should be able to instruct others in biblical doctrine and gospel implications. Leaders will teach in ways that are compelling, non-threatening, and convincing.

"Not a drunkard" refers to elders not being prone to much alcohol consumption. Their lifestyle is, as mentioned previously, exemplary and not controlled by substances that impair sound judgment. Ephesians 5:18 provides further clarification: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."

Another quality for leaders is that they must "not (be) violent but gentle." Closely connected is for the leader to "not (be) quarrelsome." Individuals who lead in the church must not be quickly provoked to anger. They must be patient, kind, gentle, and willing to compromise. Jesus related and continues to relate to others with extreme gentleness.

"Not a lover of money" is an attribute that many leaders have often overlooked throughout church history. Elders must not be greedy but use money primarily to bless others rather than to live luxuriously for themselves. Churches and Christian organizations would do

65. Larry Kreider, Ron Myer, Steve Prokopchak, and Brian Sauder, *The Biblical Role of Elders for Today's Church* (Lititz, PA: House to House, 2003), 19.

well to establish systems which would facilitate monitoring this characteristic in the lives of their leaders.

A quality that has not always received as much attention as some of the other attributes is the need for leaders to "manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive." Churches, in many ways, resemble and operate like the family unit. The New Testament speaks of brothers and sisters who are led by spiritual leaders, much like parents lead their children. Christ-like leaders will display the aforementioned attributes while leading at home and in the church.[66]

"He must not be a recent convert" is a necessary characteristic of leaders so that "he may not become puffed up with conceit and fall into condemnation of the devil." Individuals who lead Christ's people will be best equipped to lead if they have experienced some time living, striving, and leading in relationship with Jesus before assuming leadership responsibility within the local church.

Leaders are to be spiritually mature people whose lives, words, and actions give credible evidence of nearness and likeness to the Great Shepherd Himself. Note that undergirding many of these character qualities are traits such as humility, courage, strength, servanthood, persistence, self-awareness, wisdom, intuition, and ability to listen.

The epistle of Titus reveals unique leadership challenges within the local fellowship, which precipitated Paul's emphatic underscoring for godly character to be present in the lives of church leaders. Titus 1:11 mentions an instance where some teachers needed to be confronted

66. Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995), 199.

and silenced because of their ungodly teaching and behavior.[67] Paul further indicates the depraved actions of these men when he states, "They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work."[68] These verses expose why Paul would use phrases such as "must be above reproach" and not "arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain" when referring to leader qualifications.[69] Leaders, instead, must be "hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined."[70]

Purposeful New Testament Leadership

The epistle to the Ephesians provides a definitive purpose for the provision of gift-based leaders to the church. Ephesians 4:11-16 states,

> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Leadership within the church is to be purposeful – "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." Leaders in the church have a unique and intentional

67. "They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach," Titus 1:11.

68. Titus 1:16.

69. Titus 1:7.

70. Titus 1:8.

task of primarily serving God's people as a means of equipping them. The primary objective in equipping saints is to attain "the fullness of Christ."[71] Elsewhere we are told that Christians are "rooted and built up in and established in the faith."[72] In other words, as individuals in relationship with Jesus are grounded and increasing in their faith, they are ever-increasing in their likeness of Jesus. Leaders of God's people serve and lead in order to facilitate and bring about the purpose of causing Christians to become more and more like Jesus.

Oversight and Protection of the Flock

Acts 20 addresses the fact that disrupters or self-seeking individuals will rise up from the congregation attempting to lead many astray. As a result, verse 31 urges leaders to "be alert, remembering that for three years I (Paul) did not cease night and day to admonish everyone in tears." Leaders must be wary of this possibility, but even more importantly, they must be courageous enough and strong enough in the Lord to confront individuals who are consumed by self-ambition and thirst for power. But, like Paul, they must do so in humility and brokenness, shedding tears of sadness.

The apostle Peter writes of the issues of "oversight" and doing so "not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly."[73] Oversight involves both authority and responsibility. Leaders in the church have general responsibility for

71. Ephesians 4:13.

72. Colossians 2:7.

73. 1 Peter 5:2.

everything pertaining to that specific congregation. But they exercise their authority, not for personal gain but as Jesus Himself displayed; selflessly, humbly, and through servanthood.

Those who would lead God's people must be spiritually mature individuals who have counted the cost and who provide oversight by displaying humility, courage, strength, and skill at recognizing how often impediments in the church cannot be solved through technical solutions but instead require adaptive solutions. Leaders must protect, guide, and direct persons in their local ministry settings through the power of God's Spirit.

Summary of the Theological Framework

If a leadership pipeline was formed in the local church, what would it resemble? What foundational components found in the biblical record would be included? The concepts outlined in this chapter suggests examining the lives of leaders found in the Old Testament. These illustrations should include not only those who remained faithful to God but also those who failed miserably. The life of Christ should serve as the prime example of what it looks like to love and serve people. Jesus is the ultimate model of servant leadership and His call to all who would lead in His kingdom is to lead as He does. A thorough examination of the New Testament's description of church leaders, including how they were selected and what leadership qualities were considered most important, must be foundational to the implementation of a leadership pipeline. This project sought to incorporate the biblical elements outlined above via teaching modules which the prospective leaders participated in for the duration of eight weeks. The hope is that upon completion of the teaching and coaching modules the participants will be

sufficiently prepared to be considered for inclusion in the upcoming congregational election of elders.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

If a leadership pipeline was established, what would it look like? What elements should be addressed both in the life of the prospective leader and the church context in which the leader will lead? This chapter analyzes a wide-ranging sample of literature on leadership as it pertains to the local church setting. The review is divided into four sections, addressing four different areas of discussion: the inner life of leaders, adaptive leadership, shepherding, and organizational culture. Each of these areas must play a prominent role in the development of leaders.

Inner Life of the Leader

Someone has wisely stated, "Character trumps competency," and this is no more evident than in the one who leads God's people. The biblical record says that "the overseer must be above reproach."[1] The fall of high-profile leaders has been present throughout human history. But the character flaws of those providing oversight to local church communities have not been as readily apparent until the past decade. The absence of personal integrity in the lives of key leaders has rocked the evangelical world. A massive disconnect exists between who a leader is in private and who that leader is in public. One of the principal themes of these literature pieces involves the leader's inner or "private" life.

1. 1 Timothy 3:2.

Self-Awareness

Ruth Haley Barton's work describes this element in the life of those who lead as the "soul of leadership."[2] She utilizes the story of Moses' act of rage in killing the Egyptian as a backdrop to instruct leaders that "what lies beneath the surface – of the ocean of our lives – really matters."[3] Whether the leader is conscious of its existence or not is extraneous. Being aware of it or not does not make its existence any less real. "The point is that there are things lurking under the surface, and it could even be that others are seeing these things though I am not."[4] In the biblical account, Moses ran, fleeing Egypt because he feared that his actions would be revealed to Pharaoh. Often it is "fear of being found out or the actual experience of being found out that alerts us to what lies beneath."[5] Sadly many leaders have so ignored the warning signs that nothing less than catastrophe will be heeded. Dismissal from pastoral obligations, failed marriages, and worse, multiple victimized persons are the culmination of disregarding what is taking place in one's inner life.

David Benner's work, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, speaks of the necessity of "unmasking the false self."[6] As long as we live out of what we have constructed ourselves to be, we will hide from God, others, and even ourselves.

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2. Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 13.

3. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 38.

4. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 39.

5. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 40.

6. David G. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 76.

Authors Greer and Horst point out that for organizations to prevent "mission drift," leaders must maintain a pure and godly heart.[7] Pointing to the work of Robert J. Clinton, who analyzed biblical leaders and discovered that only one in three stayed in intimate fellowship with God and were able to avoid abusing their power, Greer and Horst write, "The ratio among Christian leaders is similar, if not worse, today. Without focusing on the heart, leaders are at risk. This should sound the alarm for organizations desiring to remain Mission True. While important, a fantastic and engaged board, alone, is insufficient to protect against drift."[8]

Self-awareness leads to acknowledging who we are before God as well as accepting "God on God's own terms."[9] Barton proposes that self-awareness arises by leaders willingly choosing to move into God's transformation process and then continually lead from that posture.[10] Some see the irony of pledging allegiance to Jesus, who calls for self-sacrifice, while also seeking "self-discovery" as a means of submitting to the transformation of the soul. Yet becoming more Christ-like does not lessen a person's individuality; it enhances it.[11] Leadership in the spiritual realm hinges on the health and strength of one's soul. Caring for, guarding, and ministering to the health of one's soul is not an exercise in narcissism. Rather, it is necessary to become a person's true self in God.[12]

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7. Peter Greer and Chris Horst, *Mission Drift: The Unspoken Crisis Facing Leaders, Charities, and Churches* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2014), 89.

8. Greer and Horst, *Mission Drift*, 89.

9. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 81.

10. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 15.

11. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 14-17.

12. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 25-27.

Shadow Side of Leadership

All leaders "have a shadow side to their leadership."[13] The apostle Paul made a similar assertion in Romans 7:21: "I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand." God's warning to Cain immediately before he murdered his brother alludes to this reality as well:

> In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."[14]

The words of Paul and the sad tale of Abel's murder both illustrate that when an individual fails to acknowledge and address hidden sin within the human heart through repentance and reliance on Jesus, disastrous consequences await. Authors McIntosh and Rima eloquently convey the essence of a leader's propensity to inherent weakness:

> The dark side is actually a natural result of human development. It is the inner urges, compulsions, and dysfunctions of our personality that often go unexamined or remain unknown to us until we experience an emotional explosion or some other significant problem that causes us to search for a reason why. At times the dark side seems to leap on us unexpectedly but in reality, it has slowly crept up on us…it has been a lifetime in the making.[15]

An absence of Christ-like character kills careers, destroys families, shatters relationships, and ruins a person's influence for Jesus. Often the things which drive leaders to success – personal insecurities, feelings of inferiority, and need for parental approval – become the very

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13. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 43.

14. Genesis 4:3-7.

15. Gary McIntosh and Samuel Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 22.

issues that create failure.[16] Benner believes it an illusion to hope that a leader can grow without knowing himself/herself without grasping the truth of these things. He postulates that "reality must be embraced before it can be changed."[17] As leaders increasingly come to know and accept themselves as God does, their sense of awareness deepens, enhancing their ability to grow and develop as leaders. Self-awareness causes the leader to acknowledge the need for and begin to operate within a set of particular boundaries.

Barton suggests the need to live and lead within specific limitations and boundaries instituted by the leader himself.[18] However, it is imperative that those providing oversight to Christian leaders also establish accountability structures that provide boundaries and corrective measures. Self-awareness does not grow in a vacuum but in relationship with other people and due to tools set up to allow leaders to be held accountable. One of the greatest impediments to the spiritual formation of leaders is the absence of strategic and ongoing avenues necessary to maintain balanced health. Terry Linhart states, "Over the years I have noticed that few Christian organizations or churches help young leaders systematically and intentionally with their personal development. Most have an initial training program, but after that, there is little ongoing support."[19] The lack of organizational assistance not only deemphasizes the need for self-care

16. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 43.

17. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 53.

18. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 107-111.

19. Terry Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 10.

but also as pressure mounts in the leadership sphere, "personal development is left up to each person and supervisors are sometimes at a loss of how to step in and help."[20]

Silence and Solitude

Based upon the life of the Old Testament man of God, Moses, Barton suggests silence and solitude as two key components facilitating the acquisition of knowledge that transforms.[21] Benner expresses the need for spiritual discernment to ascertain God's presence in daily life as a way of gaining knowledge that transforms.[22] Clinton states that "character formation is fundamental" because "ministry also flows out of being."[23] Dietrich Bonhoeffer adds, "To know God is to change."[24] All genuine encounters with God result in change, and leaders must learn to change if they are going to lead effectively in the ever-evolving culture of the twenty-first century.

Barton suggests that it takes something similar to Moses' murder and subsequent flight from Egypt to drive a leader into a "substantive experience" in solitude.[25] Solitude is intended to cause a leader to "settle into" themselves and "in God's presence."[26] Benner states, "Christian

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20. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 11.

21. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 31-45.

22. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 40-44.

23. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2012), 145.

24. Dietrich Bonhoeffer allegedly made this statement. Alan Hirsch, *5 Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ* (Colombia: 100Movements, 2017), xxiv.

25. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 40.

26. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 41.

spirituality involves acknowledging all our part-selves, exposing them to God's love and letting Him weave them into the new person He is making."[27] "Solitude is the only way to find ourselves again."[28] Moses' "moving into solitude with his shadow side was one of the most important things he could have done to prepare for what was ahead."[29] However, unlike Moses, "some of us will wear ourselves out trying to change ourselves before we realize that it is not about fixing; it is about letting go…of old patterns that no longer serve us."[30] The key is to embrace silence and solitude long enough that "we become safe enough with ourselves and with God to say, 'Yes, this is who I am.'"[31] Knowledge of God and self are interrelated: knowledge of the one enhances that of the other. David Benner writes, "People who have never developed a deep personal knowing of God will be limited in the depth of their personal knowing of themselves."[32]

Benner declares that God's call to follow Him and lead in His Kingdom is not merely based "solely in terms of what we do."[33] If God has indeed created individuals uniquely and invited them individually to serve in His Kingdom, then how He has fashioned them is significant and instrumental in how an individual leads. Thus, leaders must learn to live and lead out of their uniqueness.[34] Barton reveals that Moses' final days in leadership instruct leaders to become

27. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 51.

28. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 41.

29. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 43.

30. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 53.

31. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 52.

32. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 26-27.

33. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 92.

34. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 93

content with being merely a "soul in God's presence."[35] Moses no longer needed roles and responsibilities to define his existence.[36] He had transitioned to a point where the presence of God and his own privilege of entering into that presence was the most significant aspect of his leadership.

Benner proposes that prayer be characterized by a "meeting with God in the darkness and solitude of that secret place."[37] Jesus stated in Matthew 6:6, "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you." Benner affirms, "What makes this encounter possible is looking at God looking at us. As we see how deeply loved we are by God in our depths, complexity, totality, and sinfulness – we dare to allow God more complete access to the dark parts of our soul that most need transformation."[38] Leaders gain bolstering strength as they realize that God goes before them, eagerly waiting to meet them as they enter into solitude with Him.

Self-Differentiation

Edwin Friedman, an ordained rabbi and practicing therapist, on the issue extols the virtue of being a "well-differentiated leader." He defines this leader as someone "who has clarity about his or her own life goals and, therefore, someone who is less likely to become lost in the anxious

35. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 212.

36. Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 213.

37. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 56.

38. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, 56.

emotional processes swirling about."[39] For that to occur, leaders focus on themselves and their personal health. Friedman says leaders must forsake techniques of motivating and manipulating others but instead focus on personal character and their own personal well-being.[40] Linhart agrees and suggests common ways leaders seek to influence others. Some seek to prove "their worth and value through their accomplishments."[41] Other leaders use bullying tactics as a means of controlling and manipulating. Linhart further explains that leaders who lead through manipulation use a wrong metric of success based solely on the acceptance of others.[42] The devastating effects of controlling, manipulative leaders can be seen in how younger generations evaluate their personal church experience. Gerard Kelly states, "Of all the charges laid at the door of the church by many disaffected young people…the most frequent and damning is the charge of controlling leadership…stifling creativity, stunting innovation and imagination, forcing uniformity, silencing dissent."[43] Modern leaders must seek ways to address the hurt created by abusive leadership while also correcting their own tendency to be controlling.

Similarly, Peter Steinke, a congregational systems consultant, shares the importance of self-management. When an organization has become an anxious system, the leader must be a steadying, non-anxious presence. Steinke asserts, "Your calm, reflective, and principle-based

39. Edwin H. Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (New York: Church Publishing, 2017), 15.

40. Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve*, 14.

41. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 41.

42. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 41

43. Gerard Kelly, *Retrofuture: Rediscovering Our Roots, Recharting Our Routes* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 212.

action can be as infectious as anxiety. While anxiety spreads fast, the effects of a thoughtful approach are slower but eventually more effective and beneficial."[44]

Greer and Horst detail the impact one's personal well-being has on the health of the organization. They write, "Undermining the personal integrity of leaders undercuts entire organizations. An organization's strength of mission is critically tied to the personal life of its leaders. To safeguard the mission, we must safeguard our hearts."[45] In this line of thought, Linhart suggests building "margin" into one's life as a way of ensuring health as a leader:

> Margins and space in our lives, blank spaces on our calendars, can give us room to think, to form thoughts, to group ideas, and to refresh our soul and thinking. We know that, but few of us live like we do. We hustle to be productive, packing our lives with interaction and activity. As soon as we wake, we scroll through our smartphone apps. Right before bed, we're checking as well. Research has shown both practices to be harmful to us, but we keep doing it. In between we are constantly active, striving toward something. We long for more time for healthy living and regret how little time we have for it.[46]

Margins, good margins, those things that create space for sabbath rest, can be life-giving to the leader.

But how should the leader respond when they have lost the ability to self-manage? What can be done when anxiety, fear, need for control, and anger get a foothold in the leader's life? Linhart describes these instances as "dark nights of the soul."[47] His retelling of past personal struggle in this area is helpful. During this instance, Linhart focused on three areas: first, he relied

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44. Peter L. Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What* (Lanham, MD: The Alban Institute, 2006), 134.

45. Greer and Horst, *Mission Drift*, 90.

46. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 146.

47. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 106. Phrase commonly used and attributed to St. John of the Cross from his poem, *Dark Night of the Soul.*

on spiritual disciplines. He writes, "The purpose was not to fix myself emotionally but rather to draw close to God, a subtle but important distinction. A common problem with joylessness is that we've taken our primary focus off of God and onto ourselves."[48] Secondly, he sought to establish friendships with Christ-like persons. Linhart observes, "We too often withdraw when just the opposite is needed. Godly friendships have a Spirit-infused power that eradicates all sorts of protective struggles."[49] Finally, he "assigned a sentry to see what was really going on and what God had for me. Especially in ministry during times of discontent, attention is essential."[50]

Another issue that impacts the effectiveness of the leader is how they deal with the challenging aspects of leadership. Greer and Horst aptly suggest that "the biggest barrier leaders face in achieving success is their innate aversion to pain."[51] Steinke agrees and adds, "The joys of leadership have a counterpart in the pains of leadership. It is the pain that restrains many people in exercising leadership."[52] Often leaders choose to respond in less than effective ways when facing the pain of leadership. Steinke writes, "Leaders have a built-in supply of remedies that will defend them – numbing anxiety, retaliating, quitting, nurturing cynicism, to name a few."[53] On this issue, Bird and Hartwig propose a team approach to leadership. They write, "Thriving churches are led by thriving leaders. Not *one* leader but *many* leaders. And not just by a group

48. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 106.

49. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 106.

50. Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 106.

51. Greer and Horst, *Mission Drift*, 53.

52. Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times*, 134.

53. Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times*, 134.

but by a *team* – there's a big difference between the two."[54] The premise is that no one individual leader is as strong, healthy, and gifted as a team of leaders. Many churches are recognizing this truth and moving from the "solo-leadership" model, where ministry and leadership decisions flow out.

Adaptive Leadership

Churches and other organizations often encounter competing values when seeking strategic alignment. Adaptive change is necessary in order to resolve competing values and establish organizational alignment.

Tactical vs. Adaptive

Leaders often fail to recognize that not all issues in leadership are tactical problems. Many of the challenges they encounter are adaptive in nature and cannot be solved through their own expertise. Tactical challenges are addressed by employing known solutions. Installing a pacemaker in a patient suffering from an irregular heartbeat is an example of resolving a tactical problem. Adaptive challenges, on the other hand, are best confronted by addressing an individual's beliefs, values, and habits.[55]

Tod Bolsinger states, "Adaptive leadership is not about finding the best-known or most available fix to a problem, but instead adapting to the changing environment or circumstances so

54. Ryan T. Hartwig and Warren Bird, *Teams that Thrive: Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 27, emphasis by authors.

55. Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, Marty Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), 19-20.

that new possibilities arise for accurately seeing, understanding, and facing challenges with new actions."[56] Distinguishing between tactical and adaptive challenges is key to becoming skilled at adaptive leadership.

Tactical leaders attack challenges with a toolkit that includes specific skill sets and a foundation of knowledge to solve a particular issue.[57] Bolsinger clarifies, "Tactical problems are those where the solutions are available to and 'within the repertoire' of the community. These solutions come from best practices or are known and offered by an expert or implemented by a capable practitioner, professional, or manager."[58]

Ford proposes, "The central task of adaptive change is to raise competing values."[59] This is a necessary skill that leaders must develop in order to lead their churches into transformation. "Transforming leadership is not the exercise of authority or power. Rather, it is raising the right questions and making sure that competing values come to the surface and are dealt with."[60] The presence of competing values in the life of the church context is pivotal to adaptive leadership. In other words, there is a need to place the anxiety or weight of the decision back on the deciding party. Ford further explains that a solution which "doesn't step on anyone's toes or reveal the primary issue may be easy, but in the long run it is useless."[61] Resistance is often a leader's greatest ally when confronting an issue requiring adaptive change.

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56. Tod Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 40-41.

57. Kevin Ford and Ken Tucker, *The Leadership Triangle* (New York: Morgan James Publishing, 2013), 31-32.

58. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 41.

59. Kevin Ford, *Transforming Church* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2007), 110.

60. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 101.

61. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 101.

Adaptive change consists "not of seeking answers or assured visions but of taking action to clarify values."[62] Values that make up an organization's code can only be defined and addressed when exposed for all to see.[63] Adaptive change is not easy and requires patience from the leader. Two issues to consider are that this type of change must occur slowly, and it must be recognized that significant resistance will be encountered.[64] Leaders should carefully monitor the anxiety created in the system (i.e., congregation) while bringing focus to the values. Too much anxiety "immobilizes" both the system and the individual, but too little anxiety creates complacency.[65]

Bolsinger extols the difficult truth that "transformational leadership is a skillset that can be learned but not easily mastered."[66] Because it is neither a position nor a role but a "way of being," it is quite foreign to most leaders and not widely learned. Three spheres characterize how the leader will function in order to bring about transformation: it begins with technical competence. This means that the leader has gained standing from competently managing basic elements and skills for organizational success. Relational congruence follows once credibility has been established. A leader is the same person in any and every setting he operates. Finally, transformation occurs when adaptive ability is integrated. The leader is capable of assisting the organization to "grow, face their biggest challenges, and thrive."[67]

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62. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 102.

63. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 110.

64. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 115.

65. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 116.

66. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 42.

67. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 43-45.

Improving as an Adaptive Leader

New learning lies at the center of transformative adaptive change. Bolsinger bluntly suggests that "if you are not learning anything new, it is not adaptive work."[68] Clinton also speaks of the need for continual learning. "Vicarious learning" is the ability to apply to one's life as a leader lessons gleaned from the lives of others.[69] Literary items consist of biographies of current or past leaders. Many effective leaders are known for reading widely and for possessing the know-how to apply lessons gleaned. Truth from God's revealed Word is another way leaders can grow in their learning. At various times the leader receives a word from God which provides guidance, directs decisions, or challenges spiritual growth. Experiencing crises and conflicts also provide an impetus for growth and change. Lessons learned in these instances tend to arise from negative experiences. Crises are external pressures in the life of the leader intended to foster greater dependence on Christ. Conflicts involve circumstances God utilizes to develop deeper intimacy with God.[70] Clinton professes that "the most important thing learned is awareness of one's own character, strength, and weaknesses. God will use conflict to point out areas of character needing modification, to point out or confirm areas of strength, or to point out areas of character entirely missing."[71] He further asserts that often positive experiences are not nearly as formative as negative ones. Conflict is a primary tool God seems to use to stimulate a leader.[72]

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68. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 97.

69. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 122.

70. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 122-127.

71. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 142.

72. Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 143.

Because adaptive leadership must affect the whole organization, Bolsinger suggests three prominent questions that must be wrestled with: (1) "What DNA is essential and must never change? What are the key elements of our theology, tradition, ministry practices and organizational culture that must be maintained at all costs because to lose them would be to lose our identity?"[73] (2) "What DNA can be discarded? What elements of our church life, while important to us, are not essential? What can we stop doing or let die so we can free resources and energy for new forms of ministry?"[74] Ford proposes that leaders point out to those they lead the competing values as a means of assisting them to discern the DNA that must remain.[75] Often individuals experience pain at losing what they have come to love and appreciate about the code of the church. Ford states that an effective leader will "care for people as they deal with the inevitable loss that comes with change."[76] (3) "What DNA needs to be created through experimentation? What essential part of the church's identity and mission needs to be adapted to a new day, environment, or opportunity? How can the church keep doing what it is called to do, but in a way that resonates, connects, serves, and challenges people who would otherwise pay it any attention?"[77]

Bolsinger asserts that the fear of conflict which the above questions create causes

73. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 106.

74. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 106.

75. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 116.

76. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 116.

77. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 106

many leaders to avoid asking them. Furthermore, assisting others in properly answering them is difficult and often unclear. He states, "What one person considers essential, another person considers expendable; and even more, what can be adapted or changed and what must remain the same."[78]

A final component of adaptive leadership we want to consider is the tendency of the leader to fixate on the most obvious symptoms while failing to consider those less obvious. Bolsinger says the leader must learn to "look behind" the symptoms in order "to bring health and growth to the larger system."[79] Adaptive leadership differs from "directional" leadership in that "directional" gives counsel and guidance based on the leader's experience or expertise. Whereas adaptive leadership operates in the absence of experience and expertise.[80] Ford advocates for his 3-D Method as a way of introducing change that goes beyond merely symptomatic issues. These three phases are dialogue, discussion, and decision.[81] The dialogue phase involves participants sharing personal opinions without interruption or comment on those opinions. Every individual present is asked to give their opinion. The discussion phase is separated in time from the dialogue segment. Often weeks or even months pass before the group enters into discussion. This work intends to identify competing values. Participants are encouraged to agree or disagree with each other. The final phase is decision time, and often conflict emerges during this stage. However, conflict is less severe because of the work

78. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 107.

79. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 111.

80. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 111.

81. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 117.

accomplished in the previous two phases. The decision is not arrived at by a group consensus because consensus often "plays to the lowest common denominator."[82] Instead, the leader is charged with making the final decision based on what they deduce to be the best scenario for the organization.[83]

Shepherding

Another aspect highly pertinent to the development of leaders within the local church context is the act of shepherding God's people. Beeley asserts that the "main point of pastoral authority is to serve the church as a shepherd in the manner of Jesus, drawing on the resources that God has given us in order to be of benefit to others."[84] A top priority for those shepherding the people of God is to "love God and to promote the spiritual well-being of others."[85] Laniak reminds us that one is a "follower before he is a leader."[86] The biblical record reveals that God holds accountable "those who forget that the people in their care are not their own."[87] A shepherd's motivation is not for his own reputation or security; it is only for the "growth and

82. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 120

83. Ford, *Transforming Church*, 117-121.

84. Christopher A. Beeley, *Leading God's People* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), 10.

85. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 11.

86. Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 22.

87. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 22.

well-being of the church."[88] The measure of a leader's effectiveness is gauged by the "spiritual condition of his flock."[89]

Humility and Self-Sacrifice

Humility in the life of the shepherd is a "crucial virtue."[90] Laniak suggests humility as the medium that allowed Moses to assume the role of Israel's representative rather than the messenger of judgment from God to His people.[91] The office of pastor/shepherd grants the leader significant influence over people's lives. Many of the issues shepherds deal with are of great consequence requiring a humble perspective.[92] Beeley unequivocally asserts, "Either we are leading people by the Spirit of God, or we are trying to manipulate and bully them into the gospel."[93] "Pastoral leaders are in a position to do either enormous good or serious harm, to be either beneficial or dangerous to their flocks, depending on whether they convey the power of God or some other form of power. There really is no third option."[94] Speaking of the prophet Ezekiel's ministry, Laniak states that shepherds were expected to sacrifice themselves for the sheep's well-being and augment growth by paying close attention to the herd's needs.[95] They

88. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 13.

89. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 14.

90. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 37.

91. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 89.

92. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 38.

93. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 48.

94. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 49.

95. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 152.

were not only to care for the sheep; they were to serve their master, seeking to advance his wealth. A legitimate challenge for Israel's kings was their propensity to forget "whose" the people were.[96] Sadly, many of Israel's leaders became like "wild animals" who devoured the flock for food.[97]

Effectiveness in leadership requires the leader to provide whatever remedy is necessary. This means adjusting to the circumstances the sheep are facing.[98] The prophet Jeremiah exposes the ineptitude of Israel's leaders who possessed no more sense than the animals they cared for. Israel's kings' weak leadership led to the people being deported and scattered throughout different pagan kingdoms.[99] Similarly, pastors need to grow and change to lead their congregations successfully. Adapting and changing is a crucial skill for pastors wishing to lead their people to growth in Christ.[100] Beeley emphasizes, "One of the most common problems churches face is when a leader focuses excessively on one pastoral method."[101] Oh, that all pastors nearing the end of their lives would reminisce with Gregory the Theologian, archbishop of Constantinople in the fourth century, who stated, "I watered this parched flock with my words and sowed the faith that is rooted in God."[102] Jesus' shepherds could desire nothing greater as they exercise oversight over His sheep.

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96. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 152.

97. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 153.

98. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 65.

99. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 133.

100. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 66.

101. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 67.

102. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 101.

Disciplined Personal Life

Beeley exhorts pastors to "work very hard to understand Scripture deeply" in order to comprehend God's Word and share Jesus' heart for God's sheep.[103] He estimates that "disciplined study and prayer are not a distraction or escape from more important 'practical' matters of ministry; they are the most practical activities of all."[104] These disciplines must be "planned, scheduled, and protected from the more urgent but less important interruptions that arise."[105] Leaning on Gregory's insight, Laniak warns of the danger of enjoying the exhaustion arising from the many practical ministries while also becoming unfamiliar with God in our souls.[106] The goal of the pastor is to "inwardly…consider the hidden things of God" and "externally…carry the burdens of fleshly people."[107] We note a vivid illustration of this notion when Laniak, commenting on the Gospel of Matthew, points to an instance when Jesus looked out over the crowds and noticed they were harassed and helpless, acting similarly to sheep who have lost their shepherd. Jesus is moved to compassion not only because He notices their great need but because they were without a leader.[108]

One final thought to discuss is the apparent paradox that God is the source of a pastor's ministry, yet the shepherd must do much work. Augustine explains that God works through the

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103. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 92.

104. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 103.

105. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 103.

106. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 104.

107. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 104.

108. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 185.

effort and diligent work of those He has selected to shepherd His people.[109] In Laniak's notes on 1 Peter, he emphasizes the need for elders to work diligently at "guarding and paying close attention to" the needs of the sheep.[110] The shepherd must be vigilant and dedicated to detecting and thwarting threats made to the sheep by predators.[111]

Organizational Culture

One of the major themes addressed in these literary pieces is the all-important aspect of corporate culture. More and more is being written about the impact culture has on an organization. However, examples abound of leaders who either disregarded the effects of toxic cultures of organizations they lead or who personally chose to exhibit unhealthy, even unethical practices which created the cultural toxicity.

In extolling the significance of culture, Peter Drucker is said to have coined the phrase, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." Culture, more than anything, directs whether or not an organization accomplishes its mission. Often the challenge is to prevent the culture of an institution from conflicting or interfering with the organizational strategy. Also, suppose team members are not passionately engaged in their organization's vision. In that case, at best, they will fail in working to accomplish the strategic plan and, at worst, work against it being accomplished.

109. Beeley, *Leading God's People*, 124.

110. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 232.

111. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 233.

A Working Definition

Someone has described an organization's culture as "the unwritten rules we play by." *The New York Times* bestselling author Stephen Blandino refers to culture as "a set of living relationships working toward a shared goal."[112] Note in these descriptions the emphasis on action as opposed to being. Blandino clarifies, "It's not something you are. It's something you do."[113] Perhaps the most common definition is, "A culture is a way of life of a group of people – the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next."[114]

A key aspect that is helpful in grasping the impact of culture on organizational life is motivation, typically described as "why your organization does what it does."[115] Often why things are done the way they are is communicated so unconstructively through the statement, "that's just the way we do things." A legitimate justification is not supplied just pointing to the fact that things have always been performed in a manner consistent with history. Culture is more difficult to describe than organizational structure because it is not usually documented or put on paper.

112. Stephen Blandino, *The Culture Code: The Secrets of Highly Successful Groups* (New York: Bantam Books, 2018), XVIII-IX.

113. Blandino, *The Culture Code*, XX.

114. Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, and Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010),

115. Kevin Graham Ford and James P. Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce: Creating a Winning Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 13.

But culture may be a stronger determinant of one's attitude and behavior within the organization than even structure.[116]

J. R. Woodward compares culture to gravity:

> We never talk of gravity, except in physics classes. We don't include it in our weekly planning processes. No one gets up thinking how gravity will affect their day. However, gravity impacts us in everything we do, every day. Like gravity, the culture of a congregation can either pull people down to their base instincts or lift people up to their sacred potential.[117]

Ford and Osterhaus, in their book *The Secret Sauce*, declare that success in any organization, regardless of size, resources, or commerce, is determined solely by that entity's culture.[118]

Leader as Cultural Architect

Pastor Andrew Hyun best articulates the significance of shaping culture and the part Christ-followers play in its development. He states, "One of the most important roles we possess as Christians is to help shape the culture of a community so that it embodies everything we believe to be true about the gospel."[119] What is true of all Christians also applies to leaders responsible for the companies or churches they lead. One might argue that shaping culture is the most significant responsibility of leaders.

Woodward sheds light on the distinction between management and leadership and

116. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 57.

117. J. R. Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture: Equipping the Church for the Sake of the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 20.

118. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce*, XIV.

119. David S. Jung, *Gospel Culture: The Cultural Markings of a Christ-Centered Church* (New York: Hope East Queens Publishing, 2018), 9.

their respective outcomes on culture. Management operates "within" the culture. Its effect is not in altering culture or shaping it but in assisting the culture's impact on all areas of the organization. On the other hand, leadership seeks to "create" culture by what the leader values, emphasizes, and implements. Often the challenge of leadership is a refusal simply to manage and instead take on the challenging task of crafting culture. Leaders must see themselves as architects of culture. Ford and Osterhaus write, "We have all known the stark reality of working in or with an organization where we feel stagnant and experience pain! Far better to come to work that is pleasurable and marked by momentum."[120] Leaders sometimes overemphasize organizational mission and vision as the primary motivators and fail to acknowledge that culture is a greater motivator.

Lead Pastor Stephen Blandino states, "As a leader, your job is to create a learning culture that maximizes your team's capacity for being and doing."[121] But the task of creating a learning culture is challenging and requires great intentionality. According to Blandino, there are several strategies a leader must employ in order to establish a culture of learning.[122] One key ingredient is for the lead person to model personal growth. Unless the leader is growing, those around them will not prioritize their own personal growth. Whenever a leader asks something of team members that they are unwilling to do, the leader's credibility is lost, and ultimately, the organization's culture of learning is disrupted.

120. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce*, 12.

121. Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture*, 52.

122. Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture*, 53-65.

Leaders must also strive to create ample opportunities for employees and volunteers to become lifelong learners in their respective areas of responsibility. For this to occur, leaders must ascribe value to team members as people as opposed to valuing them for the contribution each employee makes to the organization.[123]

Another key task of leaders as cultural architects is working to assist the organization in becoming a learning environment by instituting structures, processes, and systems in order to institute best practices available in its industry. Woodward purports that churches are often unable to learn from the shifts around them in the wider culture. He writes, "One of the reasons the church is losing the digital generation is we have failed to incarnate an approach to leadership which takes seriously the major shifts our culture is experiencing."[124] If the church is to become a sweet aroma of Christ incarnating the Good News of Jesus, then both the congregation and her leadership will need to learn how to navigate these cultural shifts. Someone has stated that culture is what holds your organization together as everything else in the world changes. Ray Kurzweil observes,

> We're entering an age of acceleration. The models underlying society at every level, which are largely based on a linear model of change, are going to have to be redefined. Because of the explosive power of exponential growth, the 21st century will be equivalent to 20,000 years of progress at today's rate of progress; organizations have to be able to redefine themselves at a faster and faster pace.[125]

Cultural architects should also grant team members the opportunity to challenge any and all assumptions. Blandino states, "Assumptions lead to decisions, which define behaviors and

123. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce*, 69-70.

124. Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture*, 60.

125. Ray Kurzweil and Chris Meyer, "Understanding the Accelerating Rate of Change," Kurzweil, May 2, 2003, accessed August 11, 2020, http://www.kurzweilai.net/understanding-the-accelerating-rate-of-change.

outcomes."[126] Some years ago, a Harvard Business Review editorial discussed some of the causes that impede growth in organizations. A leader's unwillingness to address underlying assumptions topped that list. The authors write, "One culprit in all our case studies was management's failure to bring the underlying assumptions that drive company strategy into line with changes in the external environment – whether because of a lack of awareness that the gap existed or was widening, or because of faulty prioritization."[127] In today's world, the rate of change has accelerated drastically. Organizations and, in particular, churches need to facilitate the process where team members at all levels of the organization are encouraged to challenge assumptions.

How would a leader in a church go about establishing a culture where assumptions are challenged? Blandino suggests six methods to accomplish this:

1. Identify, in writing, your current assumptions. This will provide clarity about why you're doing what you are doing.
2. Schedule an extended off-site meeting for the specific purpose of challenging your assumptions.
3. Verbally give your team permission to challenge assumptions, and then take the lead on the assumptions challenge.
4. Listen without interruption.
5. Avoid defensiveness and verbal assaults. If you verbally attack an employee or volunteer when they challenge an assumption, the game is over.
6. Lean on the insights of your younger, newer staff. Your greatest insights will often come from your employees who are younger and/or have been with the church less than eighteen months. They bring a fresh set of eyes to your church.[128]

A final component needed to facilitate a learning culture is prioritizing the mentoring and multiplying of leaders. Churches are notorious for focusing much of their resources on programs

126. Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture*, 57.

127. Matthew S. Olson, Derek van Bever, and Seth Verry, "When Growth Stalls," *Harvard Business Review*, Reprint R0803C [March 2008]: 10.

128. Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture*, 59.

and congregational gatherings to the neglect of the development of leaders. Leadership development does not happen with motivational talks or infrequent one-on-one interactions. Developing leaders is hard work and requires great intentionality in order to build it into an organization's culture. Blandino recommends church leaders continually ask themselves the following four questions to emphasize the need to develop other leaders:

1. How am I currently investing in the growth of people on my team?
2. Who are three leaders I've developed this year? Where and how are they serving? What difference did my investment make in their lives?
3. How many hours per week (or month) do I invest in coaching and mentoring others?
4. How many of the people I have coached or mentored are intentionally investing in someone else?[129]

Healthy and Vibrant Cultures

William Vanderbloemen, of the Vanderbloemen Search Group, writes, "A healthy culture is reflected in how people view the company, the work, and one another and…how they treat one another."[130] Many might think it relatively easy to identify a toxic culture, but without access to every conversation team members have, it would be impossible to arrive at an accurate assessment of the culture. One way to bring the conversation of whether a culture is toxic or not is to encourage leadership to ask probing questions continually. Vanderbloemen suggests utilizing the following questions:

1. Is there a basic code of human decency?
2. Do people like working here?
3. Are the best people referring their friends to work at the company?
4. Do people trust the leadership of the organization?

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129. Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture*, 63-64.

130. William Vanderbloemen, *Culture Wins: The Roadmap to an Irresistible Workplace* (New York: Post Hill Press, 2018), 25.

5. How much are you collaborating?
6. Are you innovating or working the way you always have?
7. Do people take responsibility and ownership for their work?
8. Is there alignment between the service you provide and the organization's values?
9. Does your organization have sustained high turnover?
10. Does your company actively encourage and reward you for taking care of your non-work life? [131]

Authors Ford and Osterhaus propose three foundational components that make up a healthy and thriving culture: high levels of involvement by employees or volunteers, a compelling organizational climate, and effective continual leadership. Each of these elements is worth delineating.

Four qualities cause a high level of involvement by individuals within the organization.[132] First, team members are empowered. If staff personnel are to contribute to the best of their potential, they must feel heard, valued, and equipped in a way that provides them the confidence and tools necessary. Continually clarifying expectations by leadership is a key ingredient in ensuring individual team members feel empowered.

Second, there is a culture of collegiality. Thriving cultures not only empower their people, they also foster collegiality. Each team member is empowered not so they can operate in isolation but in a collaboratively healthy supportive relation to other staff members. Healthy cultures ensure that team members can count on each other.

Third, management attracts top talent and rewards them accordingly. Over and over

131. Vanderbloemen, *Culture Wins*, 26-42. Vanderbloemen lists thirteen questions. I have only listed the ones I have personally found helpful in ascertaining areas of cultural toxicity.

132. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce* 26-35.

again, research reveals that team members long to be led and managed well. The most talented people want individuals leading that will help them become the best at their jobs. Great staff members seek out accountability and feedback that is dependable and beneficial.

Fourth, a satisfying sense of engagement on the part of those within the organization, including persons in the church, is a final requirement. If leaders establish the four characteristics mentioned above, individuals in the organization will become and remain engaged.

Former pastor and current CEO of Vanderbloemen Search Agency, William Vanderbloemen, suggests internships as one way to test a prospective team member's ability to fit into the culture. "They're a great method for testing out a person's cultural fit and ability to learn new skills…. You may be surprised by how quickly people who fit into your company's culture can get up to speed on everything they need to know to do their job."[133]

Another significant culture-defining component hinges on having the right climate so that each person possesses just the right sense of belonging. The climate in our homes is adjusted to foster a warm and comfortable environment. So, too, the climate in every organization must be manipulated to produce a warm, friendly, and productive environment. Wise and effective leaders recognize that each employee or volunteer has an innate longing to belong, make a substantial contribution, and make a difference in the world. Organizational climate must be maintained at the right temperature so that each person has a sense of belonging, can contribute, and make a difference.[134]

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133. Vanderbloemen, *Culture Wins,* 19.

134. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce*, 41-51.

A final ingredient of healthy and thriving cultures is trustworthy leadership. Leaders earn valuable trust when displaying concern and care for their subordinates. Great leaders earn trust by being dependable. Dependable leaders say what they mean and mean what they say. People trust others when what they say and do is consistent and predictable. Organizations characterized by cultural excellence are known for going above and beyond for their employees/volunteers.[135]

Personal integrity on the part of leaders determines whether or not they can be trusted. Ford and Osterhaus rightly purport, "There is no greater possession each of us has than our integrity."[136] No leadership attribute directly impacts one's ability to lead more than integrity. "We believe people do not leave organizations. They leave leaders."[137] Vanderbloemen adds, "Culture is identified from the bottom – from the people within your organization – but it cannot survive if it's not replicated and reinforced from the very top."[138] Because integrity must be present in order for trust to be given, it is worth noting how challenging it is to regain integrity once it is lost. Leaders must work hard at never losing their integrity.[139]

Organizations and leaders that excel are also known for maintaining clear and open communication with team members. Leaders ensure that everyone has access to leadership, and they provide a variety of ways of nurturing effective communication. Employees and volunteers

135. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce,* 64-65.

136. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce,* 74.

137. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce*, 75.

138. Vanderbloemen, *Culture Wins*, 45.

139. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce,* 73-75.

continually ask themselves the following questions: What is expected of me? What defines success in my role? How am I able to make a viable contribution? Leaders must seek to communicate by defining these expectations and doing so repeatedly.[140]

What if it is determined that an organization's culture is unhealthy or toxic? Is there any hope of turning the culture around? Vanderbloemen believes that in order to make a radical cultural shift, only three options are viable. He says, "First, you can shift people around in their roles."[141] In some cases, team members may have been initially assigned jobs for which they are neither gifted nor content in. If that is the case, these persons need to be reassigned to different positions. Another option is "to examine the culture of those at the top, and if there's a problem, let them know they have to make a change."[142] One possibility is that the senior leader is the primary culprit. Recent history has revealed an astonishing number of senior leaders with little or no integrity. Sadly, churches have witnessed their senior/lead pastors implode and be removed from their positions, some with global influence and international followings.

The final option requires that a team member be relieved of their duties. This often means that a top executive, perhaps even the senior leader, be released. World-renowned leadership strategist Henry Cloud states, "Good cannot begin until bad ends."[143] Cloud further states, "Getting to the next level always requires something, leaving it behind and moving on. Growth itself demands that we move on. Without the ability to end things, people stay stuck,

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140. Ford and Osterhaus, *The Secret Sauce,* 65-69.

141. Vanderbloemen, *Culture Wins*, 44.

142. Vanderbloemen, *Culture Wins*, 45.

143. Henry Cloud, *Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 1.

never becoming who they are meant to be, never accomplishing all their talents and abilities should afford them."[144] Sometimes the only recourse is to remove the individual responsible for introducing the toxicity into the culture. Uber and its founding CEO are a classic example of what needs to occur when a toxic leader must be removed. Travis Kalanick's heated exchange with an Uber driver went viral in early 2017, creating concern about Uber's unhealthy culture. Uber's board forced Kalanick to go on a mandatory sabbatical. Kalanick later resigned that same year and, in 2019, completely stepped away from involvement with Uber.

Summary of the Literature Review

If a leadership pipeline was established, what would it look like? What elements should be addressed both in the life of the prospective leader and the church context in which the leader will lead? The literature related to these questions suggests prioritizing a leader's personal life. Perhaps no greater emphasis could be brought to bear in the development of leaders. Adaptive leadership must become the primary approach to addressing the modern day's rapid cultural change and turmoil. God calls individuals leading in a local church setting to serve primarily as shepherds of God's people – graciously leading, exhorting, encouraging, and admonishing them to become increasingly Christ-like. Church culture has historically been disregarded by leaders as they seek to fulfill the mission and vision of its local ministry setting. Reviewed literature reveals culture as the principal reason a church functions in a healthy or diseased manner. This project will focus on the issues outlined by engaging a group of prospective leaders, providing them the opportunity to increase their self-awareness via

144. Cloud, *Necessary Endings,* 7.

assessments, leadership acumen, and participation in training and coaching modules. Persons who complete the leadership process will be presented to the church's board of elders as potential candidates to be considered for leadership assignment.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

Can intentional training and coaching of specific younger individuals result in their being selected as elders to serve on the church board? This thesis-project has examined this question through an inquiry of the biblical record and a review of literature on leadership principles.

Testing Receptivity

One of the anticipated challenges of this project was how current lay leadership would respond. Would these leaders be open to the idea of leadership development? How would they respond to new, younger leaders who had been through a leadership pipeline? Seeking the buy-in of these leaders was vital, in my mind, to the short-term success of the project as well as any long-term adoption of a leadership farm system. In September of 2017, I began teaching ten fifteen-minute interactive lessons with the current elders at our board meetings every other month.[1] These gatherings were held twice a month and addressed church leaders' characteristics, roles, and responsibilities as outlined in the New Testament. Conversations and interactions at these meetings were enlightening, robust, and helpful in establishing the need for future elders to go through a similar process. Another benefit of this experience was the nearly universal awareness that elders should periodically and collectively revisit Scripture's teaching on

1. New lessons were introduced in September, November, December 2017 and February and March 2018. The other meetings included a review of the preceding months' lessons.

leadership. Having moved on to another ministry context, I do not know if the activity has been repeated since.

Selection of Candidates

The project began with a careful and prayerful selection of individuals willing to participate in lengthy leadership training and coaching modules. Though the initial instruction phase would not be commencing until the fall, the selection process began in the spring as I prayed and planned for clear direction from God's Spirit. The hope, on my part and that of some of the other staff leaders, was that some of the participants would become viable candidates in the upcoming annual election of elders. Seven foundational principles guided my thought process:

1. They needed to be male. In that ministry context, women were encouraged to serve in any position other than elder. Because the goal of the project was to train future elders, I would only be seeking to train males.
2. These men needed to be persons of godly character in accordance with Scripture's injunction that elders be "above reproach" and "blameless."[2]
3. It was desired that they be younger than the current elders. Historically, consideration to serve as an elder was restricted to men above the age of sixty. Exceptions were made but not often, and most of those who served were above the age of sixty-five. Including younger leaders more accurately represented the makeup

2. 1 Timothy 3:2 (NIV); Titus 1:6 (NIV).

of the congregation, but it also allowed for fresh, new, and innovative methods of ministry to be considered.

4. These men needed to be in alignment with the mission of the church. Specific elements of the church's mission and vision were considered non-negotiable (e.g., small groups over and against Sunday School). The most significant challenges the board of elders faced in past years were not issues of integrity, incompetence, or lack of doctrinal congruence. The most difficult issues involved a lack of missional alignment.
5. These men either needed to be current members or willing to become members. One of the requirements of serving as an elder was church membership.
6. The men needed to be committed to the process, attending each week without missing more than one session. We would be meeting for several months and would then follow up with a coaching segment. Admittedly this would be asking a lot of the men I invited.
7. Since trust is the foundation of any good relationship, I sought out men who had previously had some exposure to me as a leader/teacher. Some of them knew me from small groups I had led. Others were acquainted with me from missions trips we had experienced together. Still others related to me as a frequent teacher in the church's men's ministry.

Over the course of the summer, I began approaching individuals from a list of fifteen men who fit the above five guidelines and believed would serve as the best candidates. Out of that

group, eleven agreed to participate. In the end, one man was sixty-two, one was fifty-one, and the other nine were between the age of thirty-one to thirty-eight.

Implementation of Training Modules

In October of 2018, after much planning and prayer, I began meeting each Saturday morning with the eleven men who agreed to participate.[3] Session one started with an assessment of each participant's level of experience in leadership and provided an opportunity for them to contribute any topics they wished included in the teaching modules.[4]

Initial Assessment

Several interesting observations were made from this assessment. Out of the eleven men, only one had previously participated in church leadership training. The one individual who indicated previous training pointed to a single isolated instance of attending a meeting designed to recruit church deacons. No training or coaching characterized this one occasion. The absence of any substantive church leadership development in the lives of these men revealed a sobering failure on the part of the many churches represented while also affirming the need for this project.

On a scale from one to ten in "preparedness as a leader," no one graded themselves higher than eight, and some evaluated themselves in the five-to-six range.[5] Upon completion of

3. We met each Saturday from 7am to 8:30am for eight weeks.

4. See Appendix A, "Initial Questionnaire."

5. See Appendix A, question 2.

this project, I determined that more precise language could have been utilized in the questionnaire to reflect that the candidates had previously responded according to an understanding of leadership somewhat disconnected from the biblical teaching and based solely on their experience in the business world.

When asked to rate their "ability to handle your own negative emotions in a way that avoids negatively affecting others," on a scale of one to five (e.g., 1 = Never, 3 = Sometimes, 5 = Always), seven of the eleven responded with a three (sometimes).[6] I sought to address this reality in week/teaching module six while also recognizing that real growth in this area would come not in a classroom setting but with practice and more practice.

Teaching Modules

Session one of the teaching modules began on Saturday, October 20, 2018. Analogous to some of my Doctor of Ministry studies, I divided the modules into three sections: (1) Who is the leader? (2) What is being led? (3) How is he to lead?

Who is the Leader?

Module one highlighted the life of the leader by defining leadership, drawing a distinction between managers and leaders, emphasizing the need for accurate self-awareness, and acknowledging a leader's "shadow side."[7] One of the joys of this first module was hearing each man's journey, how Christ had encouraged their leadership potential. There was a palpable

6. See Appendix A, question 9.

7. See Appendix B, "Leadership Training Curriculum," Session 1.

sense of joy, excitement, and gratitude for the leadership development process we had all embarked on.

In session one, students took a self-assessment provided by Patrick Lencioni's organization, The Table Group.[8] This evaluation allowed participants to score themselves on three essential qualities of a team player. Students assessed themselves in a simple, fun way, revealing their humility, hunger, and intelligence as team players.[9]

Participants seemed to be the most engaged with material addressing a leader's "shadow or dark side." Examples of leadership failure from the lives of the men were shared in abundance. Several shared their tragic stories of biological fathers or spiritual mentors who abused their position and harmed those they supposedly cared for. Since many of the men in the class had been personally impacted by Bill Hybels, we reflected on the evil and tragic effect on the women he preyed on.

Session one ended with the thought-provoking question from Ruth Haley Barton's book, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, "What would it look like for me to lead more consistently from the place where I encounter God, rather than leading in my strength, intelligence, or my performance-oriented mindset?"[10] Each person was asked to reflect on this for the coming week and come prepared to share their response.

The second gathering began with reflection questions based on the previous week's teaching, then moved to a review of various leadership characteristics (e.g., Three/Four C's of

8. See Appendix D, "Lencioni Assessment."

9. Patrick Lencioni, *The Ideal Team Player* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016).

10. Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 25.

Leadership) while also grounding the instruction in how the biblical record describes godly leadership. Like the first meeting, the participants eagerly participated with the material by asking for clarification, agreeing with and disagreeing with some of the content presented. Much reflection and debate ensued around the topic of "living/leading in the reality of the Gospel," and students were asked to provide their responses to a question posed in session one.

In session three, students were asked to complete another assessment intended to continue to increase their self-awareness as leaders.[11] This assessment asked eighteen questions intended to highlight tendencies toward isolation, boredom, and pride. Most of the students had not undergone a similar evaluation of their predisposition toward the negative qualities focused on in the questionnaire. Once completed, participants discussed their findings in a small group venue. The session concluded with a discussion on a leader's need for accountability and self-care.

One of the goals of the project was to involve the candidates in the learning process by inviting them to continually share their personal experiences, opinions, reactions to the material, and to ask questions. As a result of this emphasis, interactions between the group were lively, and discussion was robust. Another outcome was that I continually had to shift the content designed for each module to the next session. Ninety minutes was insufficient to adequately cover the content and engage each member to the necessary extent.

11. Appendix E, "Implosion Inventory: 18 Questions for Self-Evaluation."

What is Being Led?

Module two focused on a review of three specific paradigms of church. In session one, I dealt primarily with the first two paradigms, Christendom and Attractional. Much of the content was new to the participants and, for some, caused frustration because the teaching was seen as a negative critique. Some of the students had never reflected on the church paradigm they had grown up in in any critical manner. This was most true of the older participants. When asked to reflect on their experience, they only did so with sentimentality. One of the adjustments I made in this module was to slow down the teaching and invite members to be more involved with the content by asking the following four questions:

1. What are your personal reactions to the different paradigms?
2. Do you have any memories of experiencing some of the characteristics of the paradigms?
3. Do you see any negatives to the paradigm?
4. Are you personally drawn to a particular paradigm?

These questions created an atmosphere where students could hear the experiences and opinions of others, bringing more objectivity to the material I was presenting. Another adjustment I made from my original plan was to present the material I had presented at the beginning of the session all over again. This time around, there was much more of an "aha!" response and an acknowledgment of any critical outcomes of each paradigm regardless of personal attachment to a particular one.

Session one of module two concluded with a helpful assessment of congregations. Each class member completed the questionnaire "Will Your Congregation Still Exist Ten Years from

Now?"[12] Participants were asked to further reflect on the two different paradigms outside of the class and be prepared to discuss them more in-depth in session two.

The second session detailed the third church paradigm, namely Missional, and was introduced conceptually through a video conversation with Laurence Singlehurst.[13] Students were invited to consider some of the foundational distinctives of "going" rather than "coming" and the assumption that individuals will not want to come to church as distinctive to the missional perspective. This resulted in an engaging conversation as a collective group. After further explanation of the missional paradigm, the class watched J. R. Woodward's video on "The Church as Movement."[14] Students were asked to discuss in small groups questions from the previous session:

1. What are your personal reactions to the missional paradigm?
2. Do you have any memories of experiencing some of the characteristics of this paradigm?
3. Do you see any negatives to the paradigm?
4. Are you personally drawn to the missional paradigm?

Once we reconvened, each group was asked to share their reflections with the rest of the group. Session two concluded with a dialogue on specific ways leaders have wrecked their careers. Students shared examples from their own life and work experience.

12. Appendix F, "Will Your Congregation Survive Handout."

13. "Laurence Singlehurst - moving from an attractional to a missional model of church," October 20, 2016, accessed December 21, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvuFTLsD1LU.

14. "'The Church as Movement' by JR Woodward and Dan White Jr.," July 29, 2016, accessed December 21, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9PlknOVVqU.

How is He to Lead?

The final module sought to address how those called to lead the church will do so in an ever-changing context and culture. Session one began with a review of Matthew 28:18-20 and how a missional perspective, as outlined previously, more accurately depicts the Matthew injunctions. Discussion centered on how to make the necessary transition to a missional paradigm. Leadership attributes required to lead in this context were presented and discussed. In a small group setting, participants reviewed the three paradigms and further deliberated together on the following questions:

1. What type of leader would you find in a Christendom model? In the Attractional model?
2. What qualities would a leader need to move a church to a missional focus?
3. Where do you see yourself on this spectrum?

Participants were then invited to complete a questionnaire designed to provide their own assessment of the church's discipleship culture.[15]

Session two in this module began with a lengthy class dialogue on implications regarding two quotes: (1) "The need is not so much for leaders as for saints and servants, and unless that fact is held steadily in the foreground, the whole idea of leadership training becomes dangerous."[16] And (2) "Of all the charges laid at the door of the church by many disaffected young people…the most frequent and damning is the charge of controlling leadership…stifling creativity, stunting innovation and imagination, forcing uniformity, silencing dissent."[17]

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15. See Appendix G, "Assessing Discipleship Culture Handout."

16. J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership,* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 180.

17. Gerard Kelly, *Retrofuture: Rediscovering Our Roots, Recharging Our Routes,* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 212.

The primary lesson of this module centered on organizational and church culture. The class spent most of the time unpacking the impact of organizational culture, specifically as it relates to the church. We discussed eight descriptive terms that I adapted from Stephen Blandino and steps that must be implemented when bringing organizational change to culture from Aubrey Malphurs. [18]

Session three outlined what a well-differentiated leader looks like and how this leadership style responds to challenges and crises. Participants were asked to provided examples of when they themselves displayed or witnessed other leaders differentiating from the anxiety of the organization they were leading.

Week three concluded with a lengthy time of self-reflection by each participant sharing their thoughts with the group. Each member was given a "Post-training Questionnaire" and asked to complete it before leaving for the day.[19] Of the eleven members who first began the teaching modules, only one had to miss two sessions. The other ten participants did not miss a single session.

Implementation of Leadership Coaching

One month after the eight-week sessions ended, I began meeting with those participants from the cohort who agreed to continue in a mentoring/coaching relationship. Five of the eleven accepted my invitation to be coached in a one-on-one format. The first interaction I had with

18. Stephen Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture* (N.p.: Stephen Blandino, 2013), 14-20; Aubrey Malphurs, *Look Before You Lead* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 129-144.

19. See Appendix C, "Post-Training Assessment."

each of these individuals involved sharing a meal at an area restaurant. Conversation began with low-risk dialogue allowing us to get to know each other more deeply, then moved to specific issues where each candidate was experiencing leadership challenges. An essential aspect of the coaching phase, which was not present in the teaching modules, was the possibility for me to listen and then mirror what I was hearing to the prospective leader. These conversations touched on marital issues, career difficulties, and personal growth challenges. Each time we met, we discussed each of the respective areas of challenge. We dialogued about what changes needed to be made and how those changes would be implemented. If I knew of resources that might assist them, I either suggested they rely on those materials or made them available myself.

One of the great benefits of the one-on-one interactions was the opportunity for me to learn more about each person's journey in Christ and hear about what specific ministry aspects had drawn them and their families to the church. This provided me with the occasion to push into some of the areas of the church's mission they believed needed to be improved. We then discussed how leaders might begin to bring change to those areas.

We proceeded to meet in person once a month for six weeks. I believe these coaching interactions generated an invaluable process causing the participants to trust me better, allowed me to further cement some of the most significant concepts from the teaching modules, and created a safe environment so that the members chose to disclose some of their most intimate struggles as a leader/man.

Evaluation

The aim of the project was to facilitate a process where younger leaders might be considered for inclusion in the church's ruling board. This was accomplished by providing a farm system where prospective leaders were exposed to leadership concepts and church paradigms, encouraged to grow in their emotional intelligence, and given the opportunity to be coached or mentored.

Several metrics were used in judging whether the project accomplished the stated goal: an initial questionnaire that was compared to a post-training assessment, and an opportunity for three members of the class to be considered for the elder board.[20] Comparison between the "initial questionnaire" and the "post-training questionnaire" reveals that class members perceive themselves as better prepared to enter leadership roles because of the teaching modules. At the conclusion of the project, I introduced to the elder board three of the five participants who had attended each of the teaching sessions while also joining the four-month coaching process. The three men were placed on a list with other candidates who then entered a vetting process which included being interviewed, prayerfully discussed by the full board, and finally given an affirmative or negative vote. Only one of the three chose to serve for the coming year of ministry. Since this individual was placed on a list along with other men, it cannot be categorically verified that his involvement in my project ultimately led him to be affirmed as an elder.

20. See Appendix A and C for pre- and post-training assessments.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION

Training modules followed by one-on-one coaching intended to prepare young leaders for leadership roles play a role in that preparation process. This is the hypothetical premise delineated and assessed in this thesis-project. The previous chapter outlined both the process and content of leadership training conducted in the fall of 2018. This chapter seeks to provide a review of lessons learned from the implementation of the project and give some analysis on how it might be improved for more robust results in the future.

Significant Lessons Gleaned

The adage that classrooms do not develop leaders any more than classrooms produce swimmers applies here. Although not a new lesson nor a surprising one, I was amazed at how low the retention rate was for participants on particularly significant study topics. Even with a weekly review of the previous week's content, participants would fail to recall those leadership principles they had not previously considered but were detailed in the weekly modules. Lessons that were easily transferable to one's family life or work environment did not seem to be implemented by the class members.

Considering this lesson, I attempted to include more questions in my future presentations. I also built in multiple break-out sessions where the attendees could discuss with each other the material in question. Another feature I plan to include in future training modules

is requiring multiple assignments outside of the classroom to ensure that participants review content.

A more comprehensive application of this point can be utilized in how the local church seeks to fulfill her mission. Sunday worship services, Sunday school classes, or small group gatherings are most often characterized by monologue discourses. Attendees at these gatherings are not afforded the opportunity to ask questions, wrestle with concepts, and disagree with points being emphasized. They are mere listeners. Participating in the learning process is critical to retaining and implementing truth learned.

Secondly, there is value in including content from other presenters in the training modules. Serving as the primary lecturer, I noticed several topics for which other voices would have been beneficial. The issue of racism surfaced in one of our conversations. As a middle-aged Caucasian, I am ill-equipped to serve as an instructor on this topic and would welcome the opportunity to include an African American brother or sister to serve as a guest lecturer.

Participants would also benefit from having a female presenter to balance out my male perspective. Current culture has brought to light such widespread sexism and misogyny that including an entire section on these issues, their impact on women, and how leaders must respond would be beneficial.

Additionally, a stronger, more robust selection process, including input from other existing leaders, should have been employed to select those who would participate in the training process. A weakness of the project was having based the selection of participants on my own judgment. In hindsight, a few of the participants were not committed to the process and simply agreed to do so out of respect for me personally. Future leadership cohorts should be

populated with the input of other church leaders. Admittedly, I should have also invested more time in prayer to discern God's guidance in selecting participants. I appreciate the wisdom and warning of Alexander Strauch here:

> The church and its leaders must pray for spiritual insight, guidance, and unbiased judgment. They must desire God's will and God's choice, not their own. God said, of Israel, "They have set up kings, but not by Me; They have appointed princes, but I did not know it." (Hos. 8:4a). May God not say the same of us. Sadly, too many churches expend the least amount of time and effort possible when selecting and examining prospective elders or deacons…. Evaluating an elder's or deacon's fitness for office should be done thoughtfully, patiently, and biblically. The Scripture clearly states that no one is to be appointed to office in a hurried, thoughtless manner: "Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily" (1 Tim. 5:22a).[1]

Several participants should have been excluded from the training. There were a variety of reasons this proved true, but the most obvious involved a spiritual element.[2] At least two of the potential leaders who attended the training sessions exemplified a lack of abiding in Jesus in their personal lives. Group discussions and my personal interactions with them exposed this reality. Perhaps this aspect of their personal lives would not have been easily observed apart from their inclusion in the sessions, and so the process was, in the end, helpful to them. However, it would be wise to dig deeper into the lives of potential leaders so that the ultimate purpose of raising up new leadership is not impeded as it was in this project.

No one graduates from leadership training. Every great leader must become a lifelong learner if they are to lead well. The training and coaching I provided simply provided tools to begin the learning process. I am not sure that each participant grasped and adequately

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1. Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995), 288-9.

2. Some of these reasonings include the following: missional misalignment, lack of dedication in time and effort, motivation to participate was simply to be a part of a men's small group.

adopted this concept. Some of the individuals were, by nature, learners and so in future months advised me of the things they were reading or attempting in their professions because of our time together. Others, though, who were less inclined to read, complete the assignments, or implement concepts learned in the modules, failed to refer to any significant leadership outcomes when I approached them months after the training sessions had been completed.

In general, younger leaders seem hungrier to learn than their older, more experienced counterparts. I found them to be more inquisitive, inquiring more, and forming better questions than those leaders who were more seasoned in life and career. They were also more willing to stay engaged in an extended coaching process with me. Jay Desko, a former college professor of mine and Executive Director of the Center Consulting Group, corroborates this admission:

> With age can come a bit of coasting and laziness disguised as 'positional privilege.' Not with these young leaders. From the first minute of day one to the very end of the last day, they were hungry – motivated to learn from every instructor, conversation, and site visit. It served as a refreshing reminder that leaders who lead well over the long haul never cease learning.[3]

Ministry opportunities need to be made available to participants so that they can quickly put into practice what they have learned in the training modules. If there is one glaring deficiency in the project, it is this aspect. In the future, I would want to secure several ministry opportunities each member could choose from to provide a training experience related to concepts from the teaching sessions. The challenge in securing these ministry possibilities will be that they include some way for the participants to exercise their leadership potential.

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3. Jay Desko. "What Can We Learn from Emerging Leaders? A Lot," The Center Consulting Group, August 3, 2021, accessed December 21, 2021, https://www.centerconsulting.org/blog/what-can-we-learn-from-emerging-leaders-a-lot.

More self-assessment tools reflecting an array of varied personal attributes needed to be employed. Three evaluations were used in the current project, but more could and should have been used. Each time a new assessment was introduced, the class members were eager to take the evaluations and grow their self-awareness. My personal experience and that of this project reveal that the availability of the many personality and leadership evaluations does not guarantee that individuals are taking advantage of them. Those who participated in the current project had not previously undergone any sort of self-evaluation either at work, church, or in their personal lives. Unless these assessments begin to be utilized by churches with their lay leaders or volunteers, many people will miss the opportunity to grow in self-awareness, especially as it relates to leadership.

Conclusion

This thesis-project has disclosed the importance of instituting a leadership pathway in the local church. This pipeline could be directly linked to board members who will serve as elders, as in this project, or apply it more widely to include potential leaders in any ministry position.

The project's research was conducted in an established, non-denominational congregation situated in upstate New York during a season in church life when there was a substantial need for new and younger leaders to be included in guiding the church into the future. The continued failure and exposure of this collapse in the lives of leaders worldwide strongly supports the desire to invest in leadership development.

This project, in some ways, presupposed that extended time together in a cohort-based group setting that provided instruction, group discussion, assessments, and coaching follow-up

would adequately prepare prospective leaders to lead. Another presupposition involved thinking that since no leadership pathway was being observed, any plan put into practice would be readily accepted.

The project depended heavily on resources and content from various sources, both Christian and secular. It also followed a similar pattern as the current student's D.Min. studies. Namely, dividing the teaching modules into three primary sections: (1) Who is the leader? (2) What is being led? (3) How is he to lead? The three sections were taught to eleven participants over the course of eight weeks. Assessments were given to each student before and after the eight weeks. Five of the participants continued meeting one-on-one in a coaching relationship with the project designer.

The thesis-project hypothesized that participants would be better prepared to step into leadership opportunities once the project was complete. Some of the individuals who participated indicated verbally and in a written assessment that the project prepared them to lead.

Does LCC implement a long-term strategy to train and equip younger leaders? Are there other congregations who also would see the value of pursuing a similar approach to developing leaders? If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, then this thesis-project provides a guide in how to do so. The process and content used in the project can provide one way that congregations might institute a pipeline to train leaders.

For others who want to explore this topic or implement a leadership pipeline I would further suggest several recommendations. Make prayer a priority. Leadership development is primarily about spiritual formation in the life of a leader. The goal is transformation. God is the

One who changes lives and so we must plead with Him that He change the lives of individuals in the pipeline. Another important suggestion is to work collaboratively with the other members of the ministry team. Establishing an effective leadership pipeline will depend greatly on the support of other staff and their availability to provide avenues of ministry opportunities for those engaged in the pipeline. Finally, as you paint a picture of the need for an effective leadership farm system, focus more on the opportunities and positive outcomes rather than the negative impact or flawed current leadership training. People are compelled to action by the positive and hopeful outcome not by detailing imperfections and deficiencies of the existing system.

APPENDIX A

INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Initial Questionnaire **Name: _____**
Date: _____

1. Have you ever participated in leadership training in the local church setting? Yes or No

2. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would rate yourself in preparedness as a leader? Circle one

HAVE NEVER LED NEED MORE TRAINING FEEL PREPARED

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. What are some of the leadership issues you think the church is facing today?

4. What are some of the challenges you have faced as a leader that you would like to see addressed in leadership training?

5. How important do you think the personal life of a leader is to affective leadership in the church? Circle one

NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS
0 1 2 3 4 5

6. What are some of the lessons or truths that you know the Bible teaches about leadership?

7. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the lowest), how well would you rate your ability to handle your own negative emotions in a way that avoids negatively affecting others? Circle one

NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS
1 2 3 4 5

8. On the scale below, display how much you believe a leader's ability to lead is affected by the culture of an organization (i.e. church)?

NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. I have a healthy awareness of both my weaknesses and others' perception of me. Circle one

NOT TRUE SELDOM TRUE OCCASIONALLY TRUE SOMEWHAT TRUE VERY TRUE
1 2 3 4 5

10. I can list my three greatest weaknesses: _____

_____ _____

APPENDIX B

LEADERSHIP TRAINING CURRICULUM

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
October 20, 2018
Session 1 - Who is the Leader?

There is only one problem on which all my existence, my peace, and my happiness depend: to discover myself in discovering God. If I find Him I will find myself and if I find my true self I will find Him. **Thomas Merton**

Opening Illustration: NY Giants

If you are a Giants fan (anyone?), February 3, 2008 was a remarkable day. The day the Giants defeated the New England Patriots in Superbowl XLII by a score of 17-14. The Giants were 10-6 and the Patriots were undefeated at 16-0. The game is regarded as one of the biggest upsets in the history of professional sports.

Rewind this story to 72 hours before the big game, in what is called "Media Day." As the coaches were asked by reporters about the upcoming game, somehow a young boy, about 8 or 9 years old was allowed to speak. He turned to Tom Coughlin, head coach for the Giants and simply said, "I hear you've been a lot nicer this year." To which Tom asked, "Who put you up to that?" And the room filled with uproarious laughter.

You see, the previous year, in 2007, the Giants had gone 8-8 Coach Coughlin in jeopardy of losing his job recognized he needed to make some leadership changes. So, he met with all the veteran players. These players informed Tom that he yelled too much, didn't express well his expectations of them, and failed to listen to them when they expressed their thoughts and opinions to him. As a result, Tom changed the way he coached! Michael Strahan is quoted as describing the change as, "transformation, sometimes I barely recognize him."

Tom Coughlin spent years attempting to change his players. But the performance of the team kept declining. So, he decided to make a change on himself. And as a result, his players changed…and they won Superbowl 42.

I read this story and I ask, "Are leaders born or made? Can anyone lead? Is it possible for leaders to change? Further, as a leader should I seek transformation or maybe just adjust a few things?"

I really don't know anything about the faith of Tom Coughlin but you and I hear this story and recognize that any change we do to ourselves is only skin-deep. Right? I mean my wife has been after me to do the "grey-blending" treatment on my hair for years. I have been going prematurely grey and now at 47 I'm totally grey.

Real change…real heart transformation only comes by God's grace as we submit to the Lordship of Jesus.

I want to spend the next eight weeks with you looking into three significant questions:

I. **Who is the leader?**
II. **What is he leading?**
III. **How is he to lead?**

✓ COMMON MISTAKES IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

1) Giving prospective leaders a title or position of leadership in hopes that they will live into that responsibility.
    - Wise and godly counsel would lead us to have those individuals live into the responsibility and then grant them a title. (e.g. "Grow him!")

2) Failing to institute a gradual transition of one's ability and authority.
    - There are steps in handing over ministry to someone else.
        - I do – you watch – we talk
        - I do – you help – we talk
        - We do together – we talk
        - You do – I watch – we talk
        - You do – someone else watches – You two talk

3) Not adequately outlining the description of qualifications and responsibilities.
    - Often there is a lack of clarity around the expectations and prerequisites for the role of elder.
    - Entails that the board has discussed, agree upon and established clear delineation of qualifications and responsibilities.

4) Believing that the classroom is where leadership is taught. Someone has stated, "You don't learn to swim in a classroom."
    - Reality is that the classroom setting can provide an orientation but it doesn't develop leaders.
        - Training Contexts:
            1. Skill-specific training
            2. Growth Group
            3. One-on-one coaching

        - Four Dimensions of Development:
            1. Engage with God
            2. Truth
            3. Relationships
            4. Experience

5) Forgetting to ensure faithfulness in small things first.
    - Luke 16:10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much."
    - Give nickel jobs before dollar jobs. Sometimes we want to challenge and stretch people.
6) Not creating a pathway for leadership development. (Some would call this a discipleship pathway)
    - Even if expectations are defined, there can be a lack of intentionality about how to arrive at a point where individuals live out those expectations. And so, we want to create that pathway!

I. Who is the leader?

✓ Leadership Defined:

- *"Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your leadership potential."* —Walter Bennis
- *"Leadership: The capacity and will to rally people to a common purpose together with the character that inspires confidence and trust."* —Field Marshall Montgomery
- *"Leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles."* —John Kotter, Leading Change
- *"Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes."* —Joseph Rost
- *"Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations."* —J.M Kouzes and B.Z. Posner
- *"Facilitating a group of people in the process of change toward a preferred future."* —Dana Allin

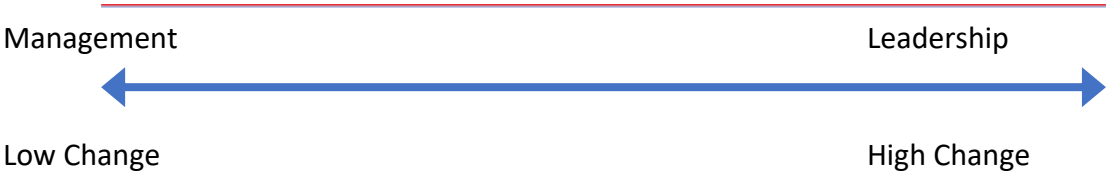
✓ The Leader is:

"A leader is not simply someone who experiences the personal exhilaration of being in charge. A leader is someone whose actions have the most profound consequences on other people's lives, for better or for worse, sometimes for ever and ever." Walter Bennis

A. Distinction between leaders and managers

- *"The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing."* —Walter Bennis
- *"Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out."* —Stephen Covey
- *"Organizing the people and resources to accomplish predefined results as quickly and efficiently as possible."* —Dana Allin

Leadership vs Management Continuum



B. Need for Self-Awareness

- One of the truths I am beginning to understand when it comes to leadership is the need for self-awareness. And I'm noting how few individuals, especially among leaders, have a good awareness of self.

1) Knowledge of Self

Becoming more knowledge is no guarantee that one will be changed, transformed. The Bible speaks of a…

a. "Knowledge that puffs up"[1]

1 Corinthians 8:1 says, "*This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up*." The phrase "puffs up" refers to making one arrogant. Whereas the word "edifies" implies "building up." If we leave our identity in Jesus out of our quest to learn more about ourselves we will left with an overinflated ego.

But the Bible also speaks of …

b. Knowledge which transforms[2]

John 8:32 "*you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free*." Note the word "know" it speaks of a personal, experiential knowing. It's the difference between "knowing about" and "knowing of." This knowledge is always relational. You see, there are some individuals who truly "believe" that God is forgiving but then there are others of us who "know" He is a forgiving God. Because we have experienced that forgiveness.

- ❖ If I were to ask each of you to identify what the most significant goal of your Christian life? I think most of us, if not all believers would point to God – "knowing Him, finding Him, serving Him, loving Him."
- ❖ Nothing wrong with any of those responses but I would venture to say that there should be more. You see, there is an interdependence between knowing God and knowing self. Transformation of self occurs when both self and God are

[1] David G. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 23-25.

[2] Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself,* 26-28.

intimately known and experienced. That's why I began with that quote this morning. READ

Quote: Thomas Merton
There is only one problem on which all my existence, my peace, and my happiness depend: to discover myself in discovering God. If I find Him I will find myself and if I find my true self I will find Him.

- ❖ As we become more and more like Jesus, we become increasingly more uniquely ourselves. God has created us all with enormous worth and uniqueness is one of the features of our value to God.
- ❖ Now it's not that this truth of the interdependency of knowing God and self has been an issue of dispute, disagreement or deemed heresy. No, it's just that it has been forgotten. What am I saying? Simply that as we have rightly focused our attention on knowing God we have often left ourselves out of the equation. And the result has been disastrous – failed marriages, broken families, sexual immorality among pastors, and lives of countless Christians wrecked. Looking to God without knowing ourselves produces an external morality but fails to affect deep internal change. It's the difference between appearance and reality.

2) Acceptance of Self

- Your personhood is the primary means God uses to impact, influence and win others to Himself.
- God is more interested in who you are becoming than He is in what you are doing.
- Leaders do not struggle because they forget they are leaders, but because they forget they are persons.
  - You are an individual before you are a leader!
  - If we fail to allow God to enter in, address and transform our brokenness, we will transfer it to others – especially those we lead.

Quote: John Calvin
"*Nearly all wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves*."

- Matthew 10:39 Jesus outlines the spiritual life "*Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*" In other words, when self is absorbed into Jesus we find ourselves.
  - As Christians we believe identity is given us by Christ thus we resist the temptation to create our identity. Identity is a gift from God. But there is also a sense in which identity is discovered. As we continue in the journey of being disciples and in our knowing God, we discover more and more who we are.

- The goal of self-awareness is not to elevate self but encounter God in areas where we need His forgiveness, His strength, His humility and His power so that we can be more faithful and experience greater effectiveness in the roles we have in life, especially the leadership roles.

- An important question for you and l to continually consider when it comes to our leadership is, "What would it look like for me to lead more consistently from the place where I encounter God, rather than leading in my strength, intelligence or my performance-oriented mindset?"[3]
  - Ultimately, what those who are looking to you and me for leadership need us first to be searching for spiritual truth ourselves. They need us to "continue searching for the bread of life that feeds our own souls so that we can guide them to places of sustenance for their own souls."[4]

- You have heard it said, "*Everything rises and falls on leadership."*
  - I have said it myself. But I'm not saying it any longer. No, that phrase is replaced with this one – "*Everything rises and falls on integrity*."

3) Addressing One's Dark Side

- All of us have a "shallow side" to our leadership. Often the very things that propel individuals to successful leadership (e.g. Personal insecurities, feeling of inferiority, need for approval from others) become the issues causing their demise.[5]
- Romans 7:21 – "*So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand*." You and I and all people have a dark side to our souls.
- Exodus 2:11-12 – "*One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. 12 He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.*"
- "*The dark side is actually a natural result of human development. It is the inner urges, compulsions, and dysfunctions of our personality that often go unexamined or remain unknown to us until we experience and emotional explosion or some other significant problem that causes us to search for a reason why. At times the dark side seems to leap on us unexpectedly but in reality it has slowly crept up on us…it has been a lifetime in the making."*[6]
- The words of the apostle Paul and the sad story of Moses' wrong reaction both illustrate that when an individual attempts to do good but fails to acknowledge

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[3] Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 25.

[4] Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 29.

[5] Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 42.

[6] Gary McIntosh and Samuel Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 22.

and address that which is deep within our souls by giving it to Jesus, sin is not far away.

- Remember the words of God to Cain immediately before he murdered his brother --- "*In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it*."

Illustration: Bill Hybels

Bill Hybels! Any of you know that name? He has been perhaps the most influential pastor of the 20th century. He founded Willow Creek Church in Chicago.

The alleged behavior included suggestive comments, extended hugs, an unwanted kiss, and invitations to hotel rooms," according to the Tribune. "It also included an allegation of a prolonged consensual affair with a married woman who later said her claim about the affair was not true."

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
October 27, 2018
Session 2 - Who is the Leader?

Opening Illustration: Star Wars Clip (Anakin and Padme)

1) **Addressing One's Shadow Side (i.e. Dark Side)**
   - All of us have a "shallow side" to our leadership. Often the very things that propel individuals to successful leadership (e.g. Personal insecurities, feeling of inferiority, need for approval from others) become the issues causing their demise.[7]
     - Quote -
       "*The dark side is actually a natural result of human development. It is the inner urges, compulsions, and dysfunctions of our personality that often go unexamined or remain unknown to us until we experience and emotional explosion or some other significant problem that causes us to search for a reason why. At times the dark side seems to leap on us unexpectedly but in reality it has slowly crept up on us…it has been a lifetime in the making."*[8]

FOR REFLECTION:
When does drive become ambition?
When does confidence turn into arrogance?
When does attention to detail become grow to be controlling?

   - Shadow side is observed through following attributes:
     1. Narcissistic
     2. Controlling
     3. Arrogant
     4. Selfish
     5. Dishonest

- Biblical Examples
  - Romans 7:21 – "*So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand*." You and I and all people have a dark side to our souls.
  - "Diseased Self-centeredness"
    "*The self is persistent. Quietly, subtly, ingeniously it works itself back to the center. We have professional careers to advance. We have institutional*

[7] Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 42.
[8] Gary McIntosh and Samuel Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 22.

responsibilities to maintain. We have families to feed and lawns to mow. We have causes to which we have invested huge chunks of our identity."[9]

- Exodus 2:11-12 – "*One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. 12 He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.*"
- The words of the apostle Paul and the sad story of Moses' wrong reaction both illustrate that when an individual attempts to do good but fails to acknowledge and address that which is deep within our souls by giving it to Jesus, sin is not far away.
- Genesis 4:4-7 – Remember the words of God to Cain immediately before he murdered his brother --- "*In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it*."

Illustration: Bill Hybels

Bill Hybels! Any of you know that name? He has been perhaps the most influential pastor of the 20th century. He founded Willow Creek Church in Chicago.

The alleged behavior included suggestive comments, extended hugs, an unwanted kiss, and invitations to hotel rooms," according to the Tribune. "It also included an allegation of a prolonged consensual affair with a married woman who later said her claim about the affair was not true."

Ironically, Bill Hybels is originator for one of the following patterns for …

A. Various Leadership Attributes

- **The "Three C's of Leadership"/ "Four C's of Leadership"**
  1. *Character* – a talented and skillful leaders will be a hindrance if integrity is missing.
  2. *Competence* – A recent *Harvard Business Review* article emphasized the impact of having highly competent people. For example, "*the best developer at Apple is at least nine times as productive as the average software engineer. The best sales associate at Nordstrom sells at least eight times as much as the average sales associate, and the best transplant surgeon has a success rate six times that of the average transplant surgeon*."
  3. *Chemistry* – a leader can meet the first two but not be the right fit for a team. Someone has stated, "*Sometimes the best players are not the right ones*." (eg. Michael Jordan as coach)

[9] Eugene Petersen, *Earth and Altar*, (InterVarsity Press, 1985), 40.

- **A "Fourth" C:**
  4. "*Conviction*" – individuals who have a sense of call or assurance that they are in the right role and serving a greater purpose.

- **The "Four E's of Leadership"**
  1. *Energy* – these persons love to "go, go, go." They possess boundless energy and attack the job at hand.
  2. *Energize* – have the know-how to motivate others to perform. Give others credit when things go awry, but accept responsibility when things go wrong.
  3. *Edge* – are competitive and know to make difficult decisions such as hiring, firing, and promoting. They do not let difficulty stand in their way.
  4. *Execution* – possess the ability to get things done. They are the key. The other "E's" are not effective without the "executers."

FOR DISCUSSION: Which of these two does your current organization utilize? Which of the two do you believe captures best what is necessary in leadership?

- Most young leaders are convinced that COMPETENCY is the key to success in life and leadership. But the #MeToo movement continues to shed light on the deception and failure of leaders, Christians have not been exempt. Something else has been missing – CHARACTER!
- You have heard it said, "*Everything rises and falls on leadership."*
  - I have said it myself. But I'm not saying it any longer. No, that phrase is replaced with this one – "*Everything rises and falls on integrity*." CHARACTER is the lid to your leadership.
- An absence of character kills careers, destroys families, shatters relationships or friendships and ruins one's influence.
  - Whether we like it or not, character, not competency, determines our capacity to lead.

- **Biblical Lens for the "Four C's of Leadership"**
  1. **Character**
     a. Fits profile for elders in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9
        - Above reproach, husband of one wife, self-controlled, prudent (marked by wisdom), honorable behavior, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to alcohol, gentle, uncontentious, generous (not stingy, greedy or preoccupied with material things), healthy life and well-ordered household, not a new believer, respected by unbelievers and free from hypocrisy, not stubborn (forcing their agenda on others or abusing authority),

b. Displays the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23 "*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;*")

2. **Competent**
   a. Spiritual gifting – God given gifts and talents necessary for leading in the church. Possessing skills acquired through training and life experience.
3. **Chemistry**
   a. The ability to "fit" with the current ministry leadership team. Enriches the community of leaders through relational harmony.
4. **Calling**
   a. Affirmation
      - Recognized and affirmed both by individual and others God's calling to serve. "*I sense God is in this*." (1 Tim. 3:1)

   b. Knowledge that transforms
      - Mt. 4:18-22 --- Jesus calls Andrew and Peter to follow Him as disciples
        - What does he know about Jesus?
          - Jesus as the prophesied Messiah (i.e. the political deliverer from oppression by the Romans)
        - What does he know about himself?
          - He would have told others he was a fisherman. And that he had a temper and was outspoken. Probably didn't know about his the deepest fears of his soul.
      - Mt. 14:22-33 --- Jesus walks on the water
        - What does Peter know now about Jesus?
          - He has observed countless miracles, heard many lessons and witnessed numerous Jesus' interactions with individuals. He now possessed a stronger conviction that Jesus was the Christ.
        - What does he now believe about himself?
          - He now understood and faced some of his fears. He had enough courage to step out but still enough fear to sink when he began to look away from Jesus. But this experience only increased his trust in Christ.
      - John 13 --- Jesus washing disciples' feet
        - What does Peter know about Jesus?
          - That Jesus loved Peter and all His disciples fully and unconditionally and is willing to do the most menial of all tasks because of His love for them.
        - What has he learned about himself?
          - He was shocked to hear that Jesus prophesied of Peter's betrayal (John 13:38). Doubting Jesus was easier than doubting himself. Peter had not yet encountered how pervasive his pride was.
      - John 18:15-27 --- Peter after his thrice denial

- What does Peter understand about Jesus?
  - That Jesus' prophetic words were accurate. It might be possible that Jesus will be killed.
- What does Peter understand about himself?
  - Devastated and self-absorbed with regret and sorrow, Peter learns that he is not as courageously bold and tough as he thought he was. He is probably confused by his lack of courage and fear. But he might also be surprised by how easily his pride had been wounded when Jesus foretold his denial.

- John 21:15-25 --- Jesus restores Peter
  - What does Peter know about Christ?
    - I think he would simply focus on one aspect of Jesus' character – "forgiving." What Peter knew by observing Jesus' forgiveness of others, he now had wonderfully experienced himself.
  - What has Peter come to grips with regarding himself?
    - That he is now ready to follow Jesus based on more than head knowledge but from his heart.

⇒ THE POINT: Peter couldn't know Jesus apart from knowing himself in relation to Jesus. And Peter did not fully know himself until Jesus showed him who he was.

FOR REFLECTION:

- Relationships develop when people spend time together.
  - Starting point for knowing Jesus is to foster relationship with him.
  - How do we spend time with Him?
- Meet Jesus in the Gospels.
  - Look at Jesus' interactions with people. Look at how <u>He treats them</u>, what <u>He says</u>, and what <u>He does</u>,
- Meet Jesus in the events of your life.
  - Recognize His presence not only in the good and blissful instances but in the midst of doubt, depression, anxiety, conflict and failure.
  - (Immanuel – God is _____ us!)

QUOTE:

"*What matters supremely, therefore, is not, in the last analysis, the fact that I know God, but the larger fact which underlies it – the fact that He knows me."* J.I. Packer

c. **Living in the reality of the Gospel**

- The Gospel is God creating sinless man in His own likeness while granting man the freedom of choice knowing that man would in fact rebel against God, so God provides the means to appease His own

wrath becoming the sacrifice for sin and pay for the penalty of man's betrayal by causing the death of Jesus on the cross, which now having satisfied that righteous demand raises up from death the Son of God in glory.

- Establishes identity in Christ
  - Identity not based on what you do (eg. your performance)
  - Identity not based on what others think of you (e.g. assessment of others)

⇒ In order for our knowing God's love for us to be truly transformational, it must become the basis for our identity in Jesus. That is as someone who is deeply loved and has been "blood-bought" by God."

- An important question for you and l to continually consider when it comes to our leadership is, "*What would it look like for me to lead more consistently from the place where I encounter God, rather than leading in my strength, intelligence or my performance-oriented mindset*?"[10]
  - Ultimately, what those who are looking to you and me for leadership need us first to be searching for spiritual truth ourselves. They need us to "*continue searching for the bread of life that feeds our own souls so that we can guide them to places of sustenance for their own souls*."[11]

[10] Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 25.

[11] Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 29.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
November 3, 2018
Session 3 - Who is the Leader?

INTRO: Becoming your true self ---- Benner, pg. 83

Personal Assessment – "*Implosion Inventory – 18 Questions for Self-Evaluation*."
- Discuss in small groups

CONTINUE from last week's list in a Leader's Calling:

d. **Need for Accountability** (no one enjoys "constructive criticism" but receiving it provides us with an outside view of how our behavior is perceived.)

- **Illustration:**
  Leader of a large church who was also a Little League coach. One year after the team he coached won the championship, when it came time to present the game ball to the MVP, he chose to…give it to himself. And then proceeded to speak to a crowd of parents on why he deserved the award. BTW – this is also how he leads his church.
  This man is in desperate need of a "spiritual friend" who will challenge his behavior and his leadership methods.

- Proverbs 27:5-6 → "*Better is open rebuke than hidden love. 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; deceitful are the kisses of an enemy*."
  Anyone want to take a stab at explaining what this verse means?
  - All of us need a "spiritual friend" who will challenge us on the <u>sins we have come to love</u> but who <u>also calls out the gifts we are afraid to embrace</u>.
  - Not helpful to have persons who simply tell you what you want to hear (eg. "*hidden love*").

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER: Who is that individual in your life? How many of you have someone in your life right now that fulfills this role?

e. **Need for Self-Care**
- *Observe a weekly sabbath*
  - Detach from work and all the mental, emotional and physical energy it requires

    - Do something relaxing
    - Develop a hobby
- *Provide care to your body*
    - Eat healthy
    - Rest sufficiently
    - Exercise
    - Limit caffeine
    - Plan recovery times before and after high stress periods
- *Establish margins*

    ❖ ILLUSTRATION: 1" margin on standard size paper equals 37% of the page's surface area. More than 1/3 of the page is given to space. That's just around the edges. The purpose? Help our eyes focus on the printed text. Creates comfortable feel for our eyes. Margins create space in our lives, blank spaces in our calendars, give us room to be creative, to form thoughts, to refresh our souls.

    - Set boundaries for the various roles you play (i.e. employee, husband, father, friend, etc.)
    - Build routines into your schedule (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly, annually) to pray, to plan, and to dream.
    - What if we took the margin principle and applied it to our lives?
    - What if of the 112 waking hours we have each week we established 37% to be unstructured and available so that we could establish healthy habits in our lives?
    - What would you do if you had 6 hours per day available as margin?
    - 37% of your day to be used to increase your health in heart, mind, soul and strength!
- *Watch your emotional health*
    - Begin responding to situations in proportion to their severity, rather than reacting to them.
    - Resolve conflict quickly. Unresolved conflict festers and intensifies the stress in your life.
    - Complete unpleasant tasks first and get them out of the way.
    - Address the anger in your life. Anger functions like a boomerang, it comes back to you and it will hurt you.

SELF-REFLECTION:

Where am I getting my identity? From what I do or who I am in Christ?
What is one area where you sense a need and desire to grow spiritually?
What would your spouse, if you are married, say you need to grow?
What would you like to be true about that one area in 3 – 6 months?
Do I need to subtract any habits or sins in my life?
What is one relationship you could nurture to provide accountability and encouragement as you walk this journey?

PRAYER:

"God, help us live within the limits of what you have called us to do. Help us live within the limits of who we are – both as individuals and as an organization. Help us give our very best in the field that we have been given to work and to trust you to enlarge our sphere of action if and when you know we are ready. Help us know the difference between being driven by grandiose visions and responding faithfully to the expansion of work in and through us."

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
November 10, 2018
Session 4 - What is being led?

Ultimately, each church will be evaluated by only one thing – its disciples. Your church is only as good as her disciples. It does not matter how good your praise, preaching, programs or property are; if your disciples are passive, needy, consumeristic, and not [moving in the direction of radical obedience], your church is not good.

- Neil Cole One Hero: Becoming a Disciple Who Makes a Difference

I. Three Paradigms

A. CHRISTENDOM

"A wedding together of church and society such that being part of one involves an expectation of being part of the other." Dr. Jim Singleton

----------SLIDES----------

1. **Characteristics**
   - **a.** Building needs to look like a church (e.g. convo. with Bruce B. about gym as sanctuary)
   - **b.** Christian education buildings
   - **c.** Dress in your "Sunday best"
   - **d.** Loyal to location
   - **e.** Giving stability by Builder Gen. (1925-1945)
   - **f.** Growth occurred through mobility and birth
2. **Pathway of Discipleship**
   - **a.** Wealth of knowledge transmitted by home life
   - **b.** Primary vehicle is Sunday School Classes
   - **c.** Knowledge based and emphasis on behavior
3. **Tendencies**
   - **a.** Local franchise of denomination
   - **b.** Geographical draw
   - **c.** Socio-economic draw
4. **Congregations**
   - **a.** Few mega-churches (2,000 in worship)
   - **b.** Few associate pastors
   - **c.** Parish-based (very local)
5. **Pastoral Obligation**
   - **a.** Pastor served as "preacher"
   - **b.** Private chaplain model
   - **c.** Preach for inspiration more than formation
6. **Ministry Emphasis**
   - **a.** Sunday am worship

b. Sunday evening worship
c. Wednesday Prayer meeting

7. **Basic Premise**
   a. Individuals will eventually return to church so just have to wait for them to.

VIDEO: Matt Chandler "Christendom and How We Got Here
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLrEgNv5QH8

REFLECTION: Any reactions to this model of church? Do you see any negatives? Are you drawn to the model? Do you have memories of experiencing some of its characteristics?

- Something Upset the Christendom Paradigm
  - Baby Boomers (1946-1964) brought extensive challenges to the Christendom model
    1. Anti-institutional
    2. Rebelled against authority
    3. Sexual revolution
    4. Rock and Roll
    5. TV
    6. Unpopular view of Vietnam
    7. Handling of race dislike
    8. Gender inequality
    9. Liberalism ideas published as popular opinion
  - Baby Boomers left and were not coming back. The Dean Hodge study revealed that 50% of those who left remained biblically unchurched.
- Something needed to be done to reach/engage Boomers.
  - Church began to ask, "How can we get you to return?"

B. ATTRACTIONAL
In order for Boomers to return the message of the Bible needs to be "culturally contextualized."

----------SLIDES----------

1. **Key Ingredients**
   a. Pop Music ("Why should the devil have all the rock music?" – Larry Norman [pioneer of Christian rock] SLIDE
   b. Informal attire SLIDE
   c. Offer options like a menu at a restaurant
   d. Driven by consumerism (i.e. Burger King) SLIDE
      i. Offer something for everyone

ii. best of everything
1. **Sparkling clean restrooms**
2. **Delightful nurseries**
3. **Cool youth ministry**

iii. Asks, "How can we get them back next week?"

2. **Pastoral Obligation**
   - **a.** Intense pressure on preacher "to perform well"
   - **b.** Entrepreneurial skill
   - **c.** Charisma
   - **d.** Influential
   - **e.** Solitary
3. **Characteristics**
   - **a.** Worship wars – church music vs. music of secular culture
   - **b.** "Build it and they will come"
4. **Discipleship Pathway**
   - **a.** Basic Bible knowledge gained at home
   - **b.** Church provides application to daily life
   - **c.** Never addressed the secular influence (damage) from the 1960's

- Attractional Churches Today
  - Many have plateaued
  - Comprised of mostly Boomer Gen.
  - Some still thriving
  - Their future is unlikely

REFLECTION:

Any reactions to this model of church?
Do you see any negatives?
Are you drawn to the model?
Do you have memories of experiencing some of its characteristics?

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
November 17, 2018
Session 5 - What is being led?

Ultimately, each church will be evaluated by only one thing – its disciples. Your church is only as good as her disciples. It does not matter how good your praise, preaching, programs or property are; if your disciples are passive, needy, consumeristic, and not [moving in the direction of radical obedience], your church is not good.

- Neil Cole One Hero: Becoming a Disciple Who Makes a Difference

INTRO VIDEO: Laurence Singlehurst "moving from attractional to missional" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvuFTLsD1LU

CONTINUE from last week: Three Paradigms

C. MISSIONAL

"*As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you*." John 20:21

- Church is in a missionary encounter with the surrounding culture.
  - "Go" rather than "Come"
  - Assumption is that individuals will not want to come to church.

- "A missional church is a community of God's people who live into the imagination that they are, by their very nature, God's missionary people living as a demonstration of what God plans to do in and for all of creation in Jesus Christ." (Roxburgh and Romanuk, Missional Leader, xv)

- "Self-Understanding: Exists as a Community Created by the Spirit that is missionary by nature in being called and sent to participate in God's mission in the world." (Craig Van Gelder, The Ministry of the Missional Church, 85)

- "A missional church is a reproducing community of authentic disciples being equipped as missionaries sent by God, to live and proclaim His Kingdom in their world. (Milfred Minatrea, Shaped by God's Heart, 12)

1. **Evangelism**
   - **a.** In the community
     - **i.** Christendom and Attractional Models – at church building
2. **Values**
   - **a.** Incarnational models of ministry – dwelling among and in relationship with the unchurched/unreached
   - **b.** Emphasis on hospitality
   - **c.** Grace-centered (i.e. story of father who put tract on car window)

d. Goal is "transformation" not just "information"
e. Equip lay persons for vocational Gospel-witness
f. "Seek the welfare of the city" – Jeremiah 29:7
i. "*But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare***.**"
g. Idea that people need to "belong before believing."

3. **Focus**
a. Making disciples
b. Missional communities in neighborhoods
c. Reversing the direction of ministry – "the sending of God"
4. **Contrast with other two paradigms**
a. Pastoral roles fall on laity not just the staff
b. Discipleship emphasizes that individuals require an intimate encounter with Jesus in order to share the Gospel with those outside the church
c. Missional prominence – Christ-followers are always "on mission."
d. Corporate worship empowers to be "sent out."
5. **Goals**
a. Equip/disciple for vocational witness
b. Attain core number that will retain intimacy and transparency
c. Worship Experience
i. Gather
ii. Confess
iii. Listen
iv. Respond
v. Send out
d. Small groups to be missional communities
e. Equipping/Discipleship
6. **Challenges**
a. Not a recipe for rapid growth
b. Value of personal relationships may inhibit growth in one location
7. **To make the transition**
a. Once 20% of the members become involved in missional experiments, the church culture will begin to change.
b. "It will take the average local church five to six years to make this transition."[12]
c. About 10% of churches will become early adopters.

VIDEO: J.R. Woodward on "The Church as Movement"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9PlknOVVqU

[12] J.R. Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture: Equipping the Church for the Sake of the World*, (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.), 193.

REFLECTION:

Any reactions to this model of church?
Do you see any negatives?
Are you drawn to the model?
Do you have memories of experiencing some of its characteristics?

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
November 24, 2018
Session 6 - How are we to lead?

Ultimately, each church will be evaluated by only one thing – its disciples. Your church is only as good as her disciples. It does not matter how good your praise, preaching, programs or property are; if your disciples are passive, needy, consumeristic, and not [moving in the direction of radical obedience], your church is not good.

- Neil Cole One Hero: Becoming a Disciple Who Makes a Difference

INTRO:

- Leadership stories
- What is the purpose of the church? Mt. 28:18-20
  - Discuss quote above...

VIDEO: J.R. Woodward on "The Church as Movement"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9PlknOVVqU

[cont] To make the transition:

d. Once 20% of the members become involved in missional experiments, the church culture will begin to change.
e. "It will take the average local church five to six years to make this transition."[13]
f. About 10% of churches will become early adopters.

LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES:

- **Number one leadership characteristic:**
  1. Biggest issue for most leaders is to comprehend and embrace humility.
     Quote: "*When a leader truly believes that he or she is no more important than the lowest level personnel in the organization, when that is fully embraced, it's everything*."[14]

- **Foundational qualities of leaders**
  1. **Humble** – An absence of excessive ego or concerns about status, are quick to point out the contributions of others and slow to seek attention for their own, share credit, emphasize team over self and define success collectively rather than individually.

[13] J.R. Woodward, *Creating a Missional Culture: Equipping the Church for the Sake of the World*, (Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.), 193.
[14] Patrick Lencioni, https://careynieuwhof.com/episode222/

2. **Hungry** - They are always looking for more things to do, learn, and responsibility to take on. They're self-motivated, diligent and constantly thinking about the next step or opportunity.
3. **Smart** - They possess common sense about people, know what is happening in a group situation and how to deal with others in the most effective way, have good judgment and intuition around the subtleties of group dynamics and the impact of their words and actions.[15]

Leadership comparison in three paradigms of church

- Review the three paradigms
- Discuss what it looks like to lead in each
- What changes need to be made to lead in a missional context?

REFLECTION:
What type of leader would you see in a Christendom model? In the attractional model? What qualities would a leader need to move a church to a missional focus? Where do you see yourself on this spectrum?

[15] Adapted from Patrick Lencioni, https://careynieuwhof.com/episode222/

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
December 1, 2018
Session 7 - How are we to lead?

The need is not so much for leaders as for saints and servants, and unless that fact is held steadily in the foreground, the whole idea of leadership training becomes dangerous.
J. Oswald Sanders

"Of all the charges laid at the door of the church by many disaffected young people…the most frequent and damning is the charge of controlling leadership…stifling creativity, stunting innovation and imagination, forcing uniformity, silencing dissent."
- **Gerard Kelly** Retrofuture: Rediscovering Our Roots, Recharting Our Routes

INTRO VIDEO: "What is leadership pipeline?"
https://app.ministrygrid.com/#/training-task/c39283ef-56fc-439a-c9e5-92e5a8ea593b/1

- Functioning as a leader
  - Drifter
  - Dreamer
  - Doer
  - Developer

- 80 – 85% of churches in America are either plateaued or in decline. Only two options:
  - plant a new church OR
  - revitalize an existing church

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

1. **Church Culture**
   a. **Culture defined –** "the way we do things around here."
   b. **Culture is the game changer**
      i. Vision and implementation is not enough.
      ii. Healthy cultures produce healthy and lasting outcomes.
      iii. Toxic cultures create toxic employees and destroy vision.
   c. **Eight descriptive terms of culture** (adapted from *Creating Your Church's Culture*[16])
      i. **Vision** – a "future-oriented picture of what your organization sees or what it wants to be." It's "like a fingerprint." Many leaders fail to recognize the importance of vision and thus spend little time invested in the long and arduous process of establishing vision. Often leaders can

[16] Stephen Blandino, *Creating Your Church's Culture: How to Uproot Mediocrity and Create a Healthy Organizational Culture* (Stephen Blandino, 2013), 14-20.

clearly articulate what "they are not going to do." But "you cannot build on what you're not going to do. People follow leaders with vision."

ii. **Values** – "one of the greatest influences on culture." They reveal what is most important to the organization. Some refer to them as "the internal rules of the game." One way to identify values is to fill in the blanks of the following statement: *Our church does* _____ *because we value* _____. The first blank is WHAT you do and the second blank is WHY you do it. (I.E. "Our church seeks to do life in community by regularly meeting in small groups because we value discipleship." "Our church prioritizes children's ministries because we value the next generation.") Stated values describe how the church operates.

iii. **Philosophy** – every leader is guided by a philosophy when making decisions. When a leader is "unclear about his/her philosophy (personally and organizationally), the consequence is employee conflict (because every employee has a philosophy as well). To better understand the culture, consider the philosophies held by the church and how they shape what is done.

iv. **Traditions** – "are the rituals and routines that you normalize and celebrate in your organization." Every organization has traditions. Even those recently established. They are not inherently wrong, but if they hold more influence than vision then they have become a hindrance.

v. **Language** – "Words frame culture." "The language you choose defines your organizations culture in the minds of the people you lead and the people you serve." In order to better understand your culture, make a list of the words and phrases that are most often utilized by leaders within the organization.

vi. **Systems** – "are the gears under your church's hood." Good systems are <u>effective</u> in that they accomplish tasks with excellence and produce the intended results. But good systems are also <u>efficient</u> because they don't waste time or money. Good systems <u>engage employees</u>. Systems that are complicated and bureaucratic build frustration and disengaged participants. Dissatisfied individuals do not foster healthy cultures. "When systems change, behaviors change. When behavior changes, the church's culture follows suit."

vii. **Measurements** – "Every organization measures something – attendance, donation, testimonies, projects completed, etc." What is measure will "<u>reveal</u> your culture and <u>reinforce</u> your culture." Question needing to be asked is: "What measurements will create a healthy culture aligned with your vision and values?"

viii. **Behaviors** – an organization needs to behave in a way that is consistent with what is being said. "Culture follows behavior and perpetuates behavior." The behavior of the organizations leaders are most significant and formative in the behaviors of the other participants in the organization. Leaders "shape behaviors <u>directly</u> by how they personally

interact with the people on their team." They also "shape behavior indirectly by the systems they create in the organization.

d. Changing the church culture – Six Steps to Implement (adapted from *Look Before You Lead*)[17]

i. Pray for change -prayer plays a critical role in the life of the church (Eph. 6:10-20). Prayer serves as a vivid reminder of our insufficiency without Jesus.

ii. Conduct a church assessment

1. Track annual average worship attendance
2. Record the church's annual average giving
3. Discover the church's strengths. What has the church done well?

iii. Discover the culture of the church

1. Observe it
2. Interpret it
    - Analyze what the values are.
    - Decipher what beliefs are held.

iv. Begin to make application to the culture

1. Determine the commonalities and uniqueness
2. Discover the weaknesses and strengths
3. Discern whether the culture is spiritually mature or immature or somewhere in between.
4. Decide where you as a leader will be most effective

v. Learn why people are change-resistant (Someone has stated that, "people (even Christian) are allergic to change.")

1. Need for change
    - Problem is: many won't see it
    - Solution help others see everything isn't right
2. Status-quo
    - Problem is: many prefer this and aren't easily persuaded out of the status-quo
    - Solution: cast new vision
3. Vested interests
    - Problem is: change involves loss of power, influence and prestige.
    - Solution: work tirelessly to win them over to the new vision.
4. Distrust of leadership
    - Problem is: dislike change because don't trust leader or his/her motives.

[17] Aubrey Malphurs, *Look Before You Lead: How to Discern and Shape Your Church Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 20130, 129-144.

- Solution: leader must combine Christ-like character with clear communication of ministry direction.

5. Stress of change
    - Problem is: most people are faced with change overload.
    - Solution: follow 3 steps
        - (1) communicate
        - (2) assure and
        - (3) involve as many as possible in the program of change.
6. Sacred cows
    - Problem is: church people tend to make what is not sacred and make it a sacred and what becomes sacred becomes immune to change.
    - Solution: Sound biblical teaching
7. Complexity of change
    - Problem is: even positive change can be perceived as complex because it is a break from what once was.
    - Solution: balance good leadership with good management in order to bring order out of the complexity.
8. Self-Centeredness
    - Problem is: most individuals are looking out for number 1.
    - Solution: for God's people to examine their hearts, motives and why they are resistant to change.
9. Know how people respond to change

CONTINUUM OF THE CHANGE RESPONSE

Open to change			Resistant to change
Early adopters	Middle adopters	Late adopters	Never adopters

10. Employ tools that facilitate change
    - Tough faith
    - Using insightful questions
    - Language of change
    - Excellent communication
    - Use of implementation teams and Ad Hoc committees

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
December 8, 2018
Session 8 - How are we to lead?

INTRO: Listen to a section of Leadership Podcast
https://careynieuwhof.com/episode222/

- Discuss implications for our lives as leaders.

[cont.] FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

2. **Well-Differentiated Leader**
   - **a.** Defined - someone "who has clarity about his or her own life goals and, therefore, someone who is less likely to become lost in the anxious emotional processes swirling about."[18]
   - **b.** leaders must forsake techniques of motivating and manipulating others but instead focus on personal character and their own personal well-being.[19]
   - **c.** Often leaders seek to prove "their worth and value through their accomplishments."[20]
   - **d.** While others lead with use bullying tactics as a means of controlling and manipulating. Linhart further explains that leaders who lead through manipulation use a wrong metric of success which is based solely on the acceptance of others.[21]
   - **e.** When an organization has become an anxious system, it is crucial for the leader to be a steadying, non-anxious presence. Steinke asserts, "your calm, reflective, and principle-based action can be as infectious as anxiety. While anxiety spreads fast, the effects of a thoughtful approach are slower but eventually more effective and beneficial."[22]

So, what do effective leaders do?
By Jenni Catron
As shared in *Leaders on Leadership:12 Leaders on Essential Aspects of Christian Leadership*

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[18] Edwin H. Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (New York: Church Publishing, 2017), 15.
[19] Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve*, 14.
[20] Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 41.
[21] Linhart, *The Self-Aware Leader*, 41
[22] Peter L. Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What* (Maryland: The Alban Institute, 2006), 134.

1. They build a plan. Ideas without a plan are just pipe dreams. Effective leaders know this and won't be content until next steps have been clarified. He or she is the person in the meeting asking, "Who is doing what by when?" They know that without clearly defined expectations and defined next steps, new ideas won't get executed.

2. They stay focused. Effective leaders recognize that a myriad of things will compete for their time and attention, so they set their priorities and remain focused on them. They manage their calendar so that their top priorities are scheduled first. They begin their day with a decision to focus on their most important tasks.

3. They keep their eye on the big picture. While they manage the details and are attentive to what it takes to bring a plan to fruition, they keep the big picture in front of themselves and those they lead. They don't lose sight of the goal.

4. They are patient and persistent. Effective leaders know that accomplishing big goals doesn't happen overnight. There will be setbacks. They will face discouragement. Sometimes it will take longer than you planned or expected. Effective leaders recognize the value of being patient with the process and the people, and yet persistent to stay after the goal.

5. They lead themselves well. Effective leaders seek to be self-aware and to understand where they need to grow and change. They recognize their influence on others and seek to be a leader others value and respect. They know that ultimately they can lead to extraordinary outcomes but if they lose the respect of those they lead, they really have not been effective in the end.

Review Self-Reflection Questions

SELF-REFLECTION:

Where am I getting my identity? From what I do or who I am in Christ?
What is one area where you sense a need and desire to grow spiritually?
What would your spouse, if you are married, say you need to grow?
What would you like to be true about that one area in 3 – 6 months?
Do I need to subtract any habits or sins in my life?
What is one relationship you could nurture to provide accountability and encouragement as you walk this journey?

APPENDIX C

POST-TRAINING ASSESSMENT

Post-Training Assessment

Name: _____
Date: _____

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, having now participated in the eight-week training module how would rate yourself in preparedness as a leader? Circle one

NEED MORE TRAINING — WILLING TO STEP OUT — FEEL PREPARED

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. As a result of the training sessions, what are some of the leadership issues you are now aware the church is facing in today's culture?

3. What are some of the challenges you have faced as a leader that you would feel were addressed in the training modules?

4. How important do you think the personal life of a leader is to affective leadership in the church? Circle one

NEVER — SOMETIMES — ALWAYS

0 1 2 3 4 5

5. What are some of the biblical lessons or truths that you found most helpful?

6. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the lowest), after participating in the six-week training sessions how well would you rate your ability to handle your own negative emotions in a way that avoids negatively affecting others? Circle one

WORSE — SAME AS BEFORE — BETTER THAN BEFORE

1 2 3 4 5

7. On the scale below, display how much do you understand a leader's ability to lead is affected by the culture of that particular organization (i.e. church)?

NEVER — SOMETIMES — ALWAYS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. I have a healthy awareness of both my weaknesses and others' perception of me. Circle one

NOT TRUE — SELDOM TRUE — OCCASIONALLY TRUE — SOMEWHAT TRUE — VERY TRUE

1 2 3 4 5

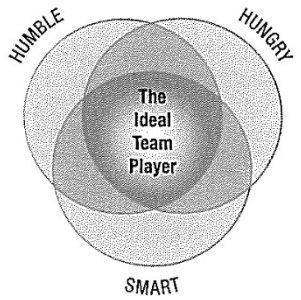
9. I can list my three greatest weaknesses/blind spots: _____

_____ _____

APPENDIX D

TEAM PLAYER VIRTUES ASSESSMENT

SELF-ASSESSMENT



Instructions: Take this assessment to evaluate yourself relative to the three virtues of an ideal team player. Respond as honestly as possible, as this will allow you to most accurately identify any areas of development that you may have.

Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to how you think your teammates may see you and your actions on the team. Choose the rating response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of the statement. Then total your scores for each of the three virtues.

Rating Scale: 3 = Usually 2 = Sometimes 1 = Rarely

Name _____		Score
HUMBLE MY TEAMMATES WOULD SAY:	1. I compliment or praise them without hesitation.	
	2. I easily admit to my mistakes.	
	3. I am willing to take on lower-level work for the good of the team.	
	4. I gladly share credit for team accomplishments.	
	5. I readily acknowledge my weaknesses.	
	6. I offer and accept apologies graciously.	
	TOTAL HUMILITY SCORE	
HUNGRY MY TEAMMATES WOULD SAY:	7. I do more than what is required in my own job.	
	8. I have passion for the "mission" of the team.	
	9. I feel a sense of personal responsibility for the overall success of the team.	
	10. I am willing to contribute to and think about work outside of office hours.	
	11. I am willing to take on tedious or challenging tasks whenever necessary.	
	12. I look for opportunities to contribute outside of my area of responsibility.	
	TOTAL HUNGER SCORE	
SMART MY TEAMMATES WOULD SAY:	13. I generally understand what others are feeling during meetings and conversations.	
	14. I show empathy to others on the team.	
	15. I demonstrate an interest in the lives of my teammates.	
	16. I am an attentive listener.	
	17. I am aware of how my words and actions impact others on the team.	
	18. I adjust my behavior and style to fit the nature of a conversation or relationship.	
	TOTAL SMART SCORE	

SCORING

Remember, the purpose of this tool is to help you explore and assess how you embody the three virtues of an ideal team player. The standards for "ideal" are high. An ideal team player will have few of these statements answered with anything lower than a '3' (usually) response.

A total score of 18 or 17 (in any virtue) is an indication that the virtue is a potential strength.

A total score of 16 to 14 (in any virtue) is an indication that you most likely have some work to do around that virtue to become an ideal team player.

A total score of 13 or lower (in any virtue) is an indication that you need improvement around that virtue to become an ideal team player.

Finally, keep in mind that while this tool is quantitative, the real value will be found in the qualitative, developmental conversations among team-members and their managers. Don't focus on the numbers, but rather the concepts and the individual statements where you may have scored low.

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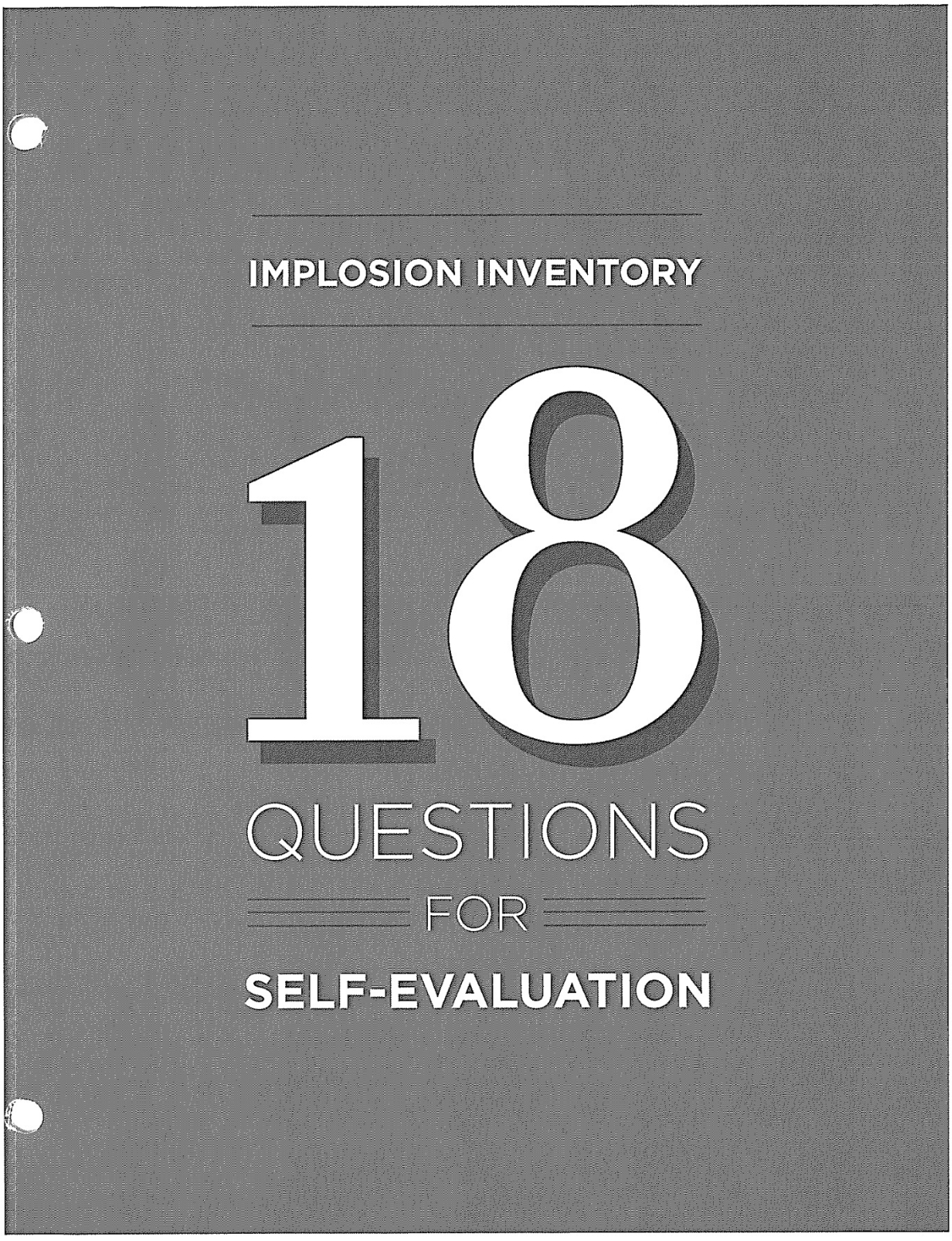
APPENDIX E

IMPLOSION INVENTORY: 18 QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EVALUATION



IMPLOSION INVENTORY:
18 QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EVALUATION

BY ERIC GEIGER

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So that new buildings can be constructed in cities, large buildings often need to be removed. And there is more than one way to take down a large structure. Instead of attaching large wrecking balls to cranes and destroying a building from the outside, demolition experts often take down the building from the inside. They place explosive devices at critical structural points in the building and set them off in sequence so that the building topples from the inside. It implodes, and people come from all over to watch it fall. People love to see a good implosion.

Before the implosion happens, everything seems normal to the casual onlooker. There is not a crane, a wrecking ball, or construction workers in hardhats announcing the looming destruction. Except for the caution tape, everything looks normal. But beneath the surface, the implosion is being meticulously planned, and the building does not stand a chance.

Leaders implode too. While attacks from the outside can harm leaders, implosion from the inside is what takes many leaders down.

When David, the king of Israel, imploded and traded his integrity for a night with a woman who was married to one of his soldiers, there were several explosives at work on the foundation of his life (see 2 Samuel 11:1-5). He was isolated, as he sent men away who would have held him accountable. He was bored, as he walked on the roof of the palace looking for something else instead of thinking on the Lord, as he would later do, through the watches of the night. He was filled with pride, as he insisted people bring Bathsheba to him even though they pointed out that she was married.

Isolation. Boredom. Pride. When these three reside in a leader's life, the leader is headed toward implosion.

Here are 18 questions to help you evaluate your own heart.

** For more on rooting isolation, boredom, and pride out of your life and leadership, get a copy of Eric's book* How to Ruin Your Life. *Available April 1, 2018*

ISOLATION INVENTORY

1 | Others confront me for actions or attitudes that are inconsistent with my faith.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

2 | Others remind me of God's grace and forgiveness.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

3 | I am in community with people who are different than me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

4 | I am told "No."

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

5 | I serve and give to others in Christian community.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

6 | I weep internally for others whom I am in relationship with.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

THOUGHTS ON ISOLATION ITEMS

1 | If you are never confronted, you are really in isolation.
You have only surrounded yourself with people who are afraid of you, and thus, you are never challenged on your blind spots or sin. And we all have blind spots and sin. A life without confrontation is a life without growth. To live without ever being challenged is to live recklessly toward self-destruction.

2 | If God's grace is never offered to you, you are really in isolation.
Just as we all need to be confronted, we all need God's grace. His grace is greater than our sin, and it is His grace that will melt our hearts and motivate us to live for Him. If people are not reminding you that God's grace is offered to you in Christ, you are living in isolation.

3 | If you are never with people who are different than you, you are really in isolation.
You have surrounded yourself only with people who are just like you, and you are missing the uncomfortable yet beautiful benefits of community that matures. Christian community is community that is built on Christ and not lesser commonalities. Thus, Christian community pulls in people who are different than one another and are united by His grace. Those differences will cause discomfort, and the discomfort will cause growth.

4 | If you never hear the word "No," you are really in isolation.
No one should only and always hear "Yes," because no one is perfect. If you have built a life for yourself where you only hear affirmations and only hear "Yes," you have chosen shallow community and are surrounded with people who will passively watch you ruin your life.

5 | If you don't give yourself to the community, you are really in isolation.
Christian community is an incredible privilege and an incredible responsibility. If you don't give yourself to the community, you are playing on the fringes and grabbing the illusion of community while really remaining in isolation. If you aren't encouraging, serving, forgiving, and praying for others, you are in the darkness of isolation.

6 | If you never weep for others, you are really in isolation.
When you are in community, you love those you are in community with. As the trials of this world plagues others, you weep. You weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. If you never weep, you are going through the motions and really living in isolation.

BOREDOM INVENTORY

1 | I tell people I am struggling with boredom.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

2 | I look to experiences to provide some new excitement.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

3 | I purchase things because I am bored and need something new.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

4 | On my phone, I am more likely to pull up social media than my Bible.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

5 | My job is boring to me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

6 | My most important relationships are boring to me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

THOUGHTS ON BOREDOM ITEMS

Unlike the other sections in the inventory, answers marked "very frequently" are obviously answers that show us we have a problem.

Blaise Pascal, the famous mathematician and theologian, wrote, "All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone." We are perpetually bored and naturally restless unless we look to the One who never bores. Augustine wrote, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." If our hearts rest in Him, we can sit in a room and rest. If our hearts do not rest in Him, we won't rest anywhere and will be plagued with boredom.

Our experiences, our possessions, our social media likes and favorites, our careers, and our relationships will not ultimately remove our boredom. They always fail us as the newness quickly fades.

When our hearts are not filled with wonder for Him, we wander from Him. If we are bored, we are looking for something other than God because God never bores. Boredom is proof our hearts have wandered from Him and are not looking at the only One who can fully quench us and give us rest.

All of these inventory items lead to the same result. If you are bored by your career, stop looking at your career. If you are bored in your relationships, stop looking at your relationships. If you are bored with your possessions, stop looking at them. Instead:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus
By Helen H. Lemmel

PRIDE INVENTORY

1 | I see myself as more sinful the longer I follow Christ.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

2 | I am grateful.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

3 | I root out entitlement in my own life.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

4 | I am filled with awe and wonder for God.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

5 | I hold God's commands in high regard. They apply to me.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

6 | I long for accountability in my life.

NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES VERY FREQUENTLY

THOUGHTS ON PRIDE ITEMS

1 | The longer you are a Christian, the more sinful you should see yourself.
Humility increases as we step closer to the Lord, and it decreases as we step away from Him. The more we look at God, the more we understand His holiness, thus realizing more fully how sinful we really are, which increases our gratitude for His grace. Because of Jesus, our joy does not diminish when we see ourselves as more sinful because we understand that His love and grace are even bigger and better than we first understood.

2 | Gratitude is connected to humility.
Pride fuels ingratitude; humility destroys it. When we remember we were slaves and prisoners to our own sin, we are deeply thankful for liberation because we know that we were only owed death because of our sin. When we humbly start the day with that perspective, we are grateful for all He provides.

3 | Entitlement always rises as pride rises.
It is impossible to be filled with humility and a sense of entitlement at the same time. Whenever we feel we are owed something, it is because we have forgotten that God is the One who gives all good things.

4 | Awe for God means you are small and He is big in your life.
If our awe for God decreases, our apathy toward Him increases. If we don't hold wonder for Jesus and what He has done for us, He is small in our lives and we are big. The more we think of ourselves, the less we think of Him.

5 | Pride manifests itself in a disregard for His commands.
Our tendency to negotiate with His commands and to contemplate if they actually apply to us reveals that we often believe our way is better. In our pride, we think we know what is best for "our lives," forgetting that our lives are not ours anymore. If we are His, our lives are His.

6 | The proud shun accountability.
A clear sign of pride is the belief that we can help and teach others but that we have moved beyond needing help and instruction. If we stop learning from others, pride has deceived us into thinking we are above instruction and counsel. The more we are filled with pride, the fewer the people we feel can offer encouragement and help to us.

FOR MORE on rooting isolation, boredom, and pride out of your life and leadership, get a copy of Eric's book *How to Ruin Your Life*. Available April 1, 2018

APPENDIX F

WILL YOUR CONGREGATION SURVIVE HANDOUT

Will Your Congregation Still Exist Ten Years From Now?

25 Factors That May Impact Your Survivability, Vitality, and Vibrancy

#	√	More Likely to Exist	√	Marginal/Uncertain	√	Less Likely to Exist
1		Empowering vision.		Programmatically flavored and captivated.		Controlled by Management.
2		Shared Vision.		Pastor's vision.		No vision.
3		Empowering and shared leadership.		Controlling leadership.		Matriarchal and/or patriarchal leadership.
4		Clear core values.		Fuzzy core values.		No apparent clarity on values.
5		Obviously Christ-centered.		Christ/culture conflict.		Obviously culture-centered.
6		In Childhood to Early Retirement stages of life cycle.		In Retirement, Birth, or Infancy stages of life cycle.		In the Old Age stage of the life cycle.
7		Intentional		Unintentional		Accidental
8		Kingdom-focused		Self-focused		Survival focused
9		High expectations of members.		Low expectations of members.		Few or no expectations of members.
10		50+ percent have all four involvement factors true of them.		25 to 50 percent have all four involvement factors true of them.		Less than 25 percent have all four involvement factors true of them.
11		Average tenure of active congregation is less than 15 years.		Average tenure of active congregation is 15 to 25 years.		Average tenure of active congregation is more than 25 years.
12		Average age of active congregation is less than 50.		Average age of active congregation is 50 to 65.		Average age of active congregation is over 65.
13		Experiencing conversion, biological, and transfer growth.		Experiencing primarily biological and transfer growth.		Experiencing primarily transfer growth, if any.
14		Relationships are about true friendships.		Relationships are about meaningful fellowship.		Relationships are about face familiarity.
15		20+ percent of active adults are tithers.		Less than 20 percent of active adults are tithers.		Only a remnant of active adults are tithers.
16		Growing context, with contextual relevance.		Stagnant context with some contextual relevance.		Shifting context with contextual irrelevance.
17		Worship is true encounter with God.		Worship is primary weekly program.		Worship is a weekly cultural gathering.
18		136 or more in weekly worship attendance.		80-135 in weekly worship attendance.		Less than 80 in weekly worship attendance.
19		Attendance growing		Attendance plateaued		Attendance declining
20		Conflict capacity.		Close calls.		Repeated conflict.
21		Empowering management.		Controlling management.		Dysfunctional management.
22		More than 30 percent of budget goes to programs, ministries, activities, and missional efforts outside the congregation.		20 to 30 percent of budget goes to programs, ministries, activities, and missional efforts outside the congregation.		Less than 20 percent of budget goes to programs, ministries, activities, and missional efforts outside the congregation.
23		No significant debt for buildings and other areas.		Significant debt.		Overwhelming and burdening debt.
24		No dependence on endowment.		Some dependence on endowment.		A lot of dependence on endowment.
25		Facilities in good shape.		Facilities need regular repairs.		Facilities crumbling around congregation
Tot						

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Dialogue about
Will Your Congregation Still Exist Ten Years from Now?
25 Factors That May Impact Your Survivability, Vitality, and Vibrancy

How many items did you check in each column?

_____ More Likely to Exist with Vitality and Vibrancy
_____ Marginal/Uncertain about Vitality and Vibrancy
_____ Less Likely to Exist with Vitality and Vibrancy

What is the average number of items checked by your team in each column?

_____ More Likely to Exist with Vitality and Vibrancy
_____ Marginal/Uncertain about Vitality and Vibrancy
_____ Less Likely to Exist with Vitality and Vibrancy

What are three items you checked in the More Likely to Exist column that exhibit the most health and strength in the life and ministry of your congregation?

Numbers: _____ _____ _____

Explain: _____

_____

_____

What are three items you checked in the Less Likely to Exist column that exhibit the most unhealth and weakness in the life and ministry of your congregation?

Numbers: _____ _____ _____

Explain: _____

_____

_____

What are the three items anywhere on the inventory that you think are the first three items your congregations ought to address and why?

Numbers: _____ _____ _____

Why? _____

_____

_____

_____

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APPENDIX G
ASSESSING DISCIPLESHIP CULTURE HANDOUT

Assessing the Root System of our Discipleship Culture
Adapted from the Navigators

Root #5 Pathway for Discipleship:

_____ We have a clear biblical picture of the stages of a disciples growth
_____ We have a simple and intentional strategy to move new believers toward discipleship
_____ We regularly communicate our pathway of discipleship
_____ Our "small groups" intentionally serve our vision of discipleship

_____ Total for Root #5 Pathway for Discipleship

Root #6 Practitioners

_____ We regularly train people to intentionally disciple others
_____ We have a plan to put disciple making in every aspect of our church ministry
_____ All of our leadership are intentionally investing in less mature believers
_____ We have a group of trained people who help newer believes grow in discipleship

_____ Total for Root #6 Practicioners

Root # 7 Progress Celebration:

_____ Our leadership regularly reviews our disciple making process
_____ Our leadership makes decisions for the future based upon our disciple making progress
_____ We recognize and celebrate publically our "wins" in disciple making
_____ We have defined metrics for progress in disciple making

_____ Total for Root #7 Progress Celebration

Grand Total: _____
28-40 A disciple making culture barely exists in our church
41-72 We have signs of an emerging disciple making culture
73-95 WE are making progress in developing a disciple making culture
96-112 We can celebrate a disciple making culture

Reflection Question

1. Which part of the Root System was the healthiest in your church? What was the weakest?

2. What do you need to do based upon this Assessment?

Assessing the Root System of our Discipleship Culture
Adapted from the Navigators

Instructions: Answer each question on a scale of 1-4. One indicates a very low level or nonexistent presence in your church. Four indicates a high commitment in your church. Total the number for each root system factor as well as your total for all seven factors.

Root #1 Passion for God:

_____ People openly talk about loving God
_____ Many people in our congregation are practicing regular spiritual disciples for growth
_____ Our leaders model a love for God and practice of spiritual disciplines
_____ The congregation's passion for God is evident to anyone coming to our church

_____ Total for Root #1 Passion for God

Root #2 Passion for the Gospel:

_____ We consistently provide basic training in evangelism
_____ Our people share their faith in relationships with non-Christians
_____ Our ministries and preaching help Christians root their identity in the gospel
_____ We have a biblical and intentional evangelism strategy

_____ Total for Root #2 Passion for the Gospel

Root #3 Purposeful Leaders:

_____ We have a written vision and mission statement that has disciple making at its core
_____ Our leaders intentionally disciple others
_____ Our leaders evaluate ministry in terms of how well it makes disciples
_____ The structure and function of our church is geared toward making disciples

_____ Total for Root #3 Purposeful Leaders

Root #4 Picture of a Disciple:

_____ We have a biblical picture of a disciple of Jesus
_____ Most of our congregation could describe our church's understanding of a disciple
_____ We have organized our ministry around our picture of discipleship
_____ Our leaders regularly examine their discipleship based on our common understanding

_____ Total for Root #4 Picture of a Disciple

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VITA

Rev. Jeffrey P. Robinson

Born: Columbus, Georgia, November 5, 1970

Education:
Cairn University, Langhorne, PA: B.S. (Bible), 1996.
Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, TN: M.Div. 2000.

Work:

Doctor of Ministry Studies:
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA:
Attended D.Min. program (Leadership in a Changing Church Context), 2016-2018.
Anticipated Graduation: May 2022.